THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE

PSM3

January 2007
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www.psm3mag.com

PlayStation 3

THE DARKNESS

PS3 WORLD EXCLUSIVE

SURVIVAL HORROR! And YOU are the horror!

PS3 GAMES REVIEWED

MotorStorm, Ridge Racer 7
Genji: Days Of The Blade
Resistance: Fall Of Man
Tony Hawk's Project 8
Tiger Woods 07
AND MORE!

"THE SECOND PS3 IN THE WORLD"

Sleeping on Tokyo's streets for a launch day PS3. Full incredible story inside

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Future
MEDIA WITH PASSION

JANUARY 2007 £3.99
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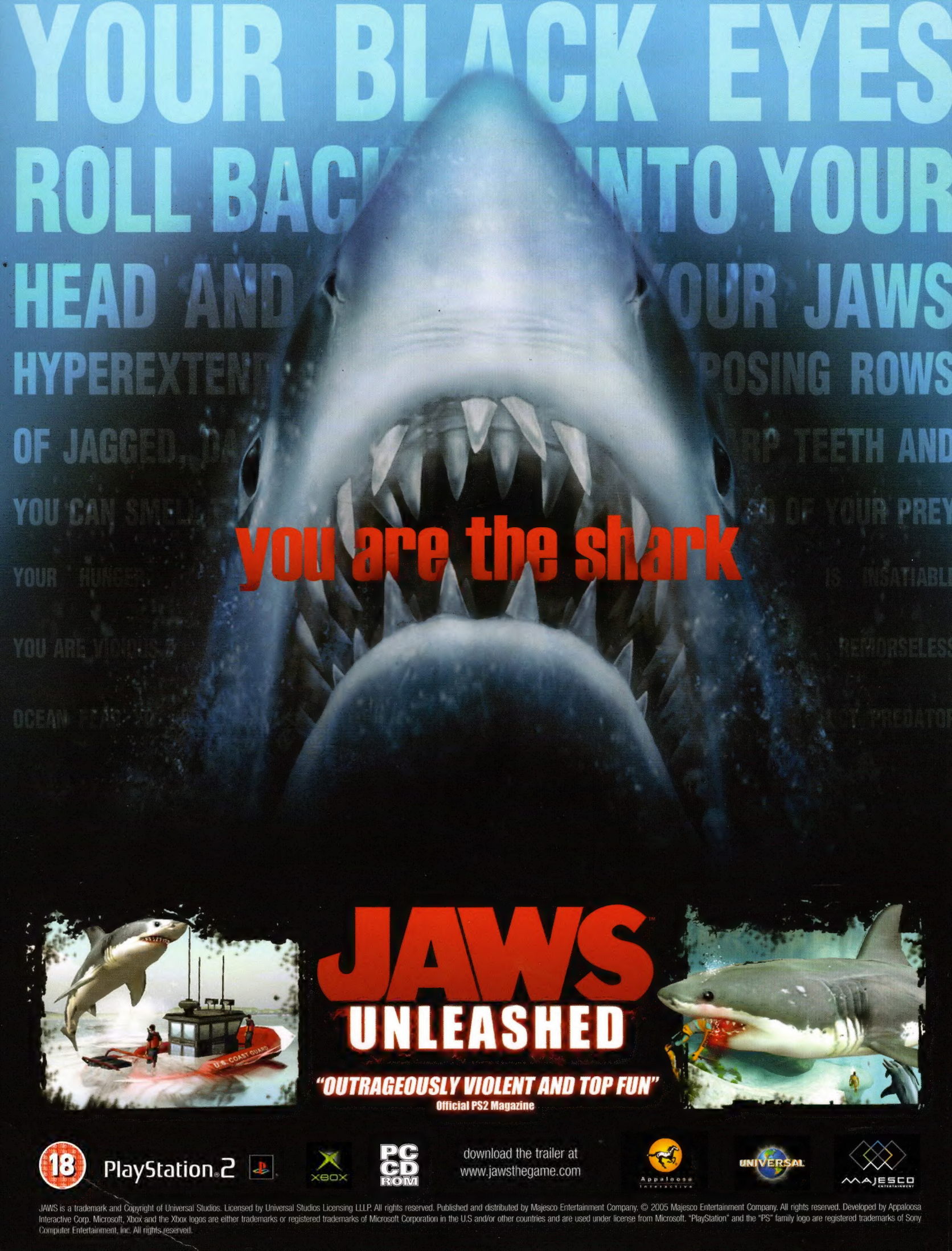

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PSM3 Start

"Delivering the goods, now and through 2007"

Don't want to keep you too long here. We've got quite an issue for you, y'see. By now the PS3 dust has settled and we're almost (that's *almost*) used to seeing PS3 next to our TVs. Turn to page 8 for all the madness from the Japanese and American PS3 launches and flip to page 42 for our amazing first-hand experience of queuing up for PlayStation 3 on launch day. What's more, you can win the PS3 we bought in our competition on page 49. More? We've got in-depth reviews of PS3's games so far and a stunning exclusive on one of its most exciting originals (*The Darkness*, on page 20). It's been quite a 2006 and, with 2007 and PS3's UK launch, around the corner the ride can only get more exciting. Meet you here next month.

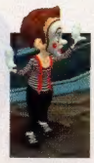
Daniel Griffiths Editor
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

In the making of this issue of PSM3...
17 'hilarious' Justin Hawkins jokes
1,493 aliens resisted
& two sleepless nights on Tokyo's streets

The PSM3 Promise

The sharpest opinions
Every bit of the magazine is dedicated to giving you more information. If we're worried that a feature in a game isn't working, we'll not only tell you about it, but we'll have a word with the developer too.

The biggest games
Fact is, if a game makes it into the pages of PSM3 then it's something worth knowing about. PSM3 says no to lazy page fillers and boring 'me too' games.



The richest detail
We finish every game we review. Our secrets are the result of us playing the game and finding them ourselves. We've got what you want to know and tell you how you want to hear it.

The most committed videogame mag team
The PSM3 team live and breathe PlayStation. There's no game we haven't played and there's no end to our quest for knowledge and gaming greatness.

The best DVD action
We've got the best DVD in the business. We cram it with the best PS3, PS2 and PSP games each and every month. For free.

Three to read first...

"A van full of PS3 boxes turns up, and is immediately surrounded"
PSM3 travels to Japan to bring you **The Second PS3 In The World** – page 42

"Pulverised car shells blocking every turn"
MotorStorm on PS3 reviewed – page 58

"This beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain makes for a great shooter"
Massive review of **Resistance: Fall Of Man** on PlayStation 3 – page 52

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The PlayStation 3 Magazine

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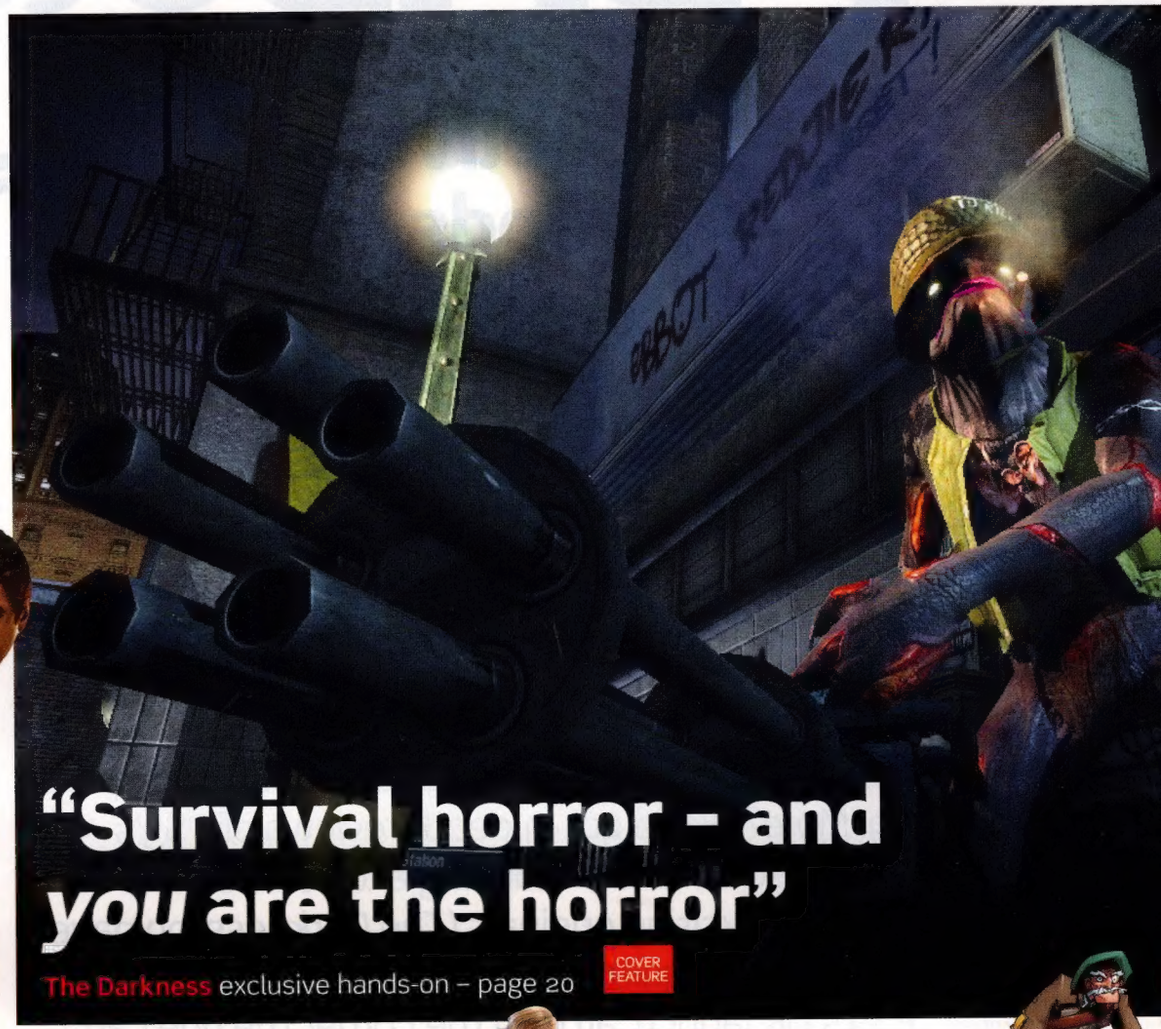

"Survival horror – and *you* are the horror"

The Darkness exclusive hands-on – page 20 COVER FEATURE

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Playing PlayStation longer, harder, deeper.

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We plunge into the history of *Final Fantasy* and emerge 100% wiser.

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Funnier than a Cannon and Ball marathon.

"Next-gen graphics, last-gen gameplay"

Genji: Days Of The Blade shows that PS3 can do bad just as well as good – page 78

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THERE'S A REASON NIGHTMARES HAPPEN IN THE DARK.

Mankind has no one else to turn to. Nowhere else to run. The planet is falling apart. Its people cornered within the only safe area remaining. The Locust Horde has risen and they won't stop coming. They won't stop killing. The government turns to whoever they have left. The sick, the wounded, the imprisoned. An inmate named Marcus Fenix. Once left to die, he is now humanity's last hope. He can take comfort in but one fact. The human race isn't extinct. Yet.

"The best game we've ever seen!"
GamesMaster

GEARS OF WAR

18 EPIC GAMES Microsoft game studios XBOX LIVE

Jump in.

XBOX 360™

On this month's DVD

DVD Highlights Packed with the latest PS3, PS2 and PSP videos

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PSM3 DVD
Over two hours of PlayStation 3, PlayStation 2 & PSP video
PRO EVO 6 STRATEGY GUIDE
EXCLUSIVE Training videos from the DVD official guide
RAINBOW 6 VEGAS
ONLY ON PSM3 See why PS3 packs the power to win
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Stunning in-game movie
See the future NOW!
15
FEATURING Stranglehold | Metal Gear Solid 4 | Unreal Tournament 2007 | Ninja Gaiden Sigma
Ridge Racer 7 | Clive Barker's Jericho | Hot Shots Golf | Mobile Suit Gundam | FFXII | And more

Gran Turismo HD

Stop press: *Gran Turismo HD* has become *Gran Turismo 5*. And on our disc you can see the latest footage of the game in action. Will this track be featured on the demo being released on Christmas Eve?

Rainbox Six Vegas

Watch the sparkly trailer for the terrorist-busting squad game's trip to Vegas. Whether you get drunk and accidentally marry a stranger remains to be seen, but it looks excellent.

Ninja Gaiden Sigma

Xbox's hardest game comes to PS3. Learn what you can from this trailer, because you'll need all the help you can get. It's *rock*.

Pro Evo 6 strategy guides

Tired of being whupped by your mates at *PES6*? Watch our sample guides to God's own footie game and you'll soon be as good as Wayne Rooney. Or if not, on a par with Robbie Savage.

+ Stranglehold | **Unreal Tournament 2007** | Clive Barker's Jericho | **Ridge Racer 7** | Metal Gear Solid 4 | **Mobile Suit Gundam** | Guitar Hero 2 | **FFXII** | **More**

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Frontline

Hard news, all PlayStation action

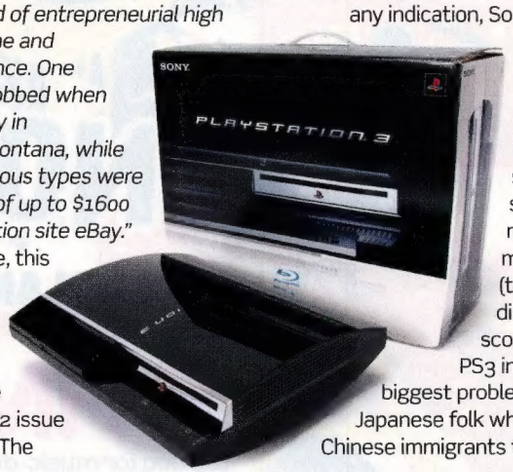
PS3 US/JAPAN LAUNCH

Here we go again! The truth about the PS3 launch

Forget the headlines – the US/Japan launch is remarkably similar to PS2's...

Sony's new console has launched in the US and, while some gamers strolled off with one after 16 hours of sleeping on a street, others were swept up in a whirlwind of entrepreneurial high spirits, heartache and senseless violence. One teenager was robbed when leaving Best Buy in Gaithersburg, Montana, while other unscrupulous types were attracting bids of up to $1600 on internet auction site eBay."

At first glance, this sounds like the recent PS3 launch in the US/Japan, but these words are taken from PSM2 issue 4. The subject? The American PS2 launch back in December 2000. For all the hysteria surrounding the recent PS3 launches, it's just a case of history repeating – and if PlayStation 2 is any indication, Sony have reason to be upbeat.



PS3 hit Japan on November 11. The launch went relatively smoothly, despite stock shortages, mass queuing and minor scuffling (turn to page 42 to discover how PSM3 scooped the second PS3 in the world). The biggest problem was rich Japanese folk who'd paid poorer Chinese immigrants to stand in line for them, leading to translation difficulties when shopkeepers tried to organize the queues. Once such incident at Bic Camera, Tokyo, led to a tightly-packed queue breaking apart, allowing people who been 200th in line to scramble into 20th. The man at the head of the queue was greeted by Sony boss Ken Kutaragi, but he barely understood Japanese, leading to some embarrassing unanswered questions.

The PS Store

Sony's online shop is go, with HD trailers including The House of Flying Daggers, full games like *Blast Factor* and demos like *Resistance: Fall Of Man*. You can also download PSone games to your PSP, including *Cool Boarders*, *Tekken 2* and *Syphon Filter* for $5.99 (£3) each.

Out to launch

Sony shipped approximately 80,000 PS3's at Japanese launch – about 20,000 less than first predicted – with the basic 20Gb model retailing for ¥49,800 (about £218), and 60Gb around ¥60,000 (£264). Only 0.98 (a mathematical average) game(s) were sold with each machine, with *Ridge Racer 7* and *Gundam: Target In Sight* the only PS3 games to sell over 30,000 copies. Rumour

ON THE DISC
See the latest PS3 movies on the disc now
PS3/Latest

Boxing clever Sony's US launch party made a big deal of unloading the first PS3s in the country.

Pees and queues The US launch was characterised by sad-looking men in tents making the best of things.

has it that *Sega's Golf Club* sold only 1500 copies, about the same as most Xbox 360 games. In the week PS3 launched, Japan's top selling console was... [drum roll] the DS Lite, with Nintendo games occupying eight slots in the All Formats top ten. Ah. Sony are still claiming there'll be one million PS3's in Japan before year end, though.

The US launch, on November 17, was more troubled. Sony's failure to provide a focal point for the launch – outside of a celebrity-packed launch party in New York that did nothing to dispel allegations that Sony are more concerned with their brand profile than their actual customers – coupled with the rise of YouTube and 'citizen journalism', meant the abiding image of the US PS3 launch was pockets of tired men queuing outside low-rent regional branches of Wal Mart. As the US

Idiocy How US TV coverage defies belief

Games are for nerds, right? We'll save the lazy stereotypes to our US cousins...

Fox News

Rupert Murdoch's conservative US news channel broadcasted live from the Best Buy store in Cleveland, marvelling at the "Gi-gundus tent they've set up!", as the camera wobbled incredulously over a six foot canvas shelter. "Are you a big gamer *junkie*?" beamed the newsreader to a bemused teenager.

TG Daily

He might work for a low profile technology news site, but presenter Humphrey Cheung deserves an award for delivering a story about eight men queuing up for a PS3 with the mournful intensity you might associate with, say, World War III. One man cancelled his wedding to queue up, apparently. Blinding.

BBC Newsnight

It's not American, but it's good to see the BBC argue that Wii is 'quite fun' and PS3 has 'nice graphics' and writer Paul Morley to conclude that "they're not as good as books." The last word belongs to film buff Mark Kermode. "I hate computer games. I've played them, but hopefully I'll never have to play them again."

KOMO (ABC)

The American BBC was fairly even handed, questioning whether Paris Hilton had to queue for *her* PS3, before cutting to a frosty-breathed ginger teenager outside Tukwila Wal Mart. The shock was that only 12 of 52 people were keeping their PS3, with the rest selling them on eBay for "up to $2500".

ON THE DISC
See the PS3 launch line up on DVD right now
PS3/Coming Soon

Launch Reporting

What does the mainstream press make of PS3? A mixed reaction...

BBC Online

Key quotes:
"The lightness of the controller gives a strange disconnected feeling, as if the action is not really entirely under your control."

Biggest gripe:
"It is a rather ironic size, given how much bad press the Xbox 360 received in Japan."

Verdict:
The BBC, typically, focused on the hardware's features and presented the facts clearly, but concluded that Sony built PS3 with "the long term in mind", praising the machine's power, potential and unused features, but questioned the online set up, PSP-to-PS3 connection and whether Blu Ray is a "winning technology".

NY Times

Key Quotes:
"The PS3's whole online experience feels tacked on and unpolished."
"PS3 does not provide basic functions many expect"

Biggest Gripe:
"Sony insisted PS3 would leapfrog all competition to deliver unsurpassed fun – put bluntly, they failed."

Verdict:
The New York Times was savagely outspoken, claiming PS3 graphics were good, but "no prettier than Xbox 360", critical of how difficult it was to get online (again, relative to Xbox 360), and lambasted Sony's decision to ship with lo-res composite cables, when the console's selling point is HD Blu-ray. They were also critical of having to plug a PS3 pad in via USB when you visit a friend's house (due to potential firmware differences), and the awkwardness of connecting music players like iPods and the like, particularly since you can't listen to your own tunes in-game. They did concede the machine was powerful, and *Resistance* was "excellent" online, but lamented the machine's lack of polish and "fun".

Wired

Key Quotes:
"From a pure tech-for-your-buck angle, PS3 is a bargain... the price is far lower than the sum of its parts. But my fingers slipped off the trigger buttons."

Biggest gripe:
"The PS3 pad's lack of feedback is a disappointment."

Verdict:
Wired took the most measured view. They were generally pleased with its "sci-fi" looks and subtle interface. The Sixaxis was praised for being rechargeable via USB, but while the tilt motion was applauded, Wired conceded few launch games used it properly. They were hugely impressed by The Playstation Store, but wished you could download 'in the background' while doing other stuff.

Hail, cease here Japanese queues were largely orderly, but stock shortages caused uncharacteristic tension.

Media storm The mainstream Japanese press and TV coverage was less feverish than the US.

news networks fell over themselves to report shootings, rich customers paying beggars to take their place in queues and PS3s being sold on eBay for $2000 (see 'How US TV Coverage Defies Belief'), the machine debuted to mixed critical response (see 'What They're Saying'),

How Wii fared While Sony courted Lindsay Lohan and other random celebs at their 'launch' party, Nintendo's Times Square Wii launch bash was attended by smiling kids and *everyone* left with a console – the difference in priorities was quite startling.

Got a problem?

The reliability of initial PS3 machines fell under the radar. There were a few claims of overheating, and a problem with PS3 downscaling 720p images into 480p on older HDTV sets – a fault likely to be fixed with subsequent firmware updates. There are also backward compatibility problems with a number of PS2 games, with a full list on www.jp.playstation.com.

While the global stock shortages and chaotic scenes at US retailers are regrettable – symptomatic of Sony's ill preparedness and, possibly, arrogance – the future of PS3 might be brighter than it appears. A report by research firm Strategy Analytics predicts Sony will 'win' in the long term with 60% of the market by 2012, with 121.8m PS3's to Microsoft's 59.7m Xbox 360s. There are also parallels to be drawn with the battle between PS2 and Sega's Dreamcast in 2000 – with critics at the time claiming Sega's installed base, and the lack of graphical difference between the consoles meant they'd win in the long term. As we write, Sony have shifted over 100m PS2's and the production of Dreamcast halted in 2001. While it's ludicrous to suggest the same fate for Xbox 360, Sony's mass-market appeal and brand strength can't be underplayed.

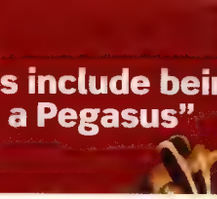
Stand and deliver Sony promise to deliver 100,000 new PS3s a week to satisfy demand.

Déjà vu?

Back in 2000, we reported that Sony had slashed the US PS2 allocation to 500,000, citing problems with the graphics synthesizer chip, and it went on to conquer the world. Six years later, in 2006, Sony slashed the initial US allocation to 300,000, after problems with the blue laser diode in the Blu-ray player and... only time will tell if history is as cyclical as we might believe.

When will PS3 will launch in the UK? Sony's lack of reassurance evokes a sadder piece of history – the UK's nine-month wait after the Japanese launch of PSP. They can't delay PS3 again... *right?*

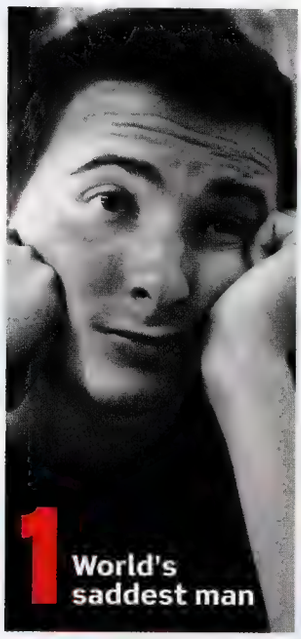
"New features include being able to fly on a Pegasus"
God Of War 2 page 12

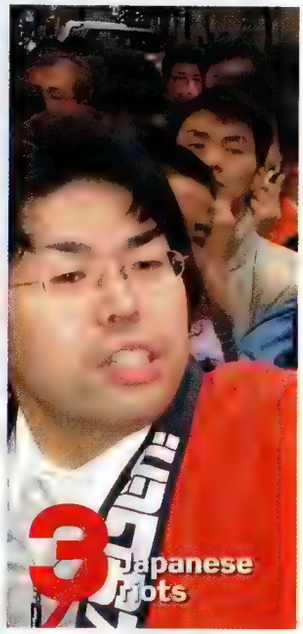


PS2 PLAYTEST

The five best PlayStation 3 launch stories

Sexy, violent, tragic... and that's just the boring ones





The launch of PS3 has been the most widely-reported of all time, with videos and stories consuming the internet. For example, the world's saddest man (1) tells on a forum tells how he went to get a Wii for his daughter and ended up with a 60Gb PS3 because the guy in the shop offered him it. What's he got to be sad about? His wife wants to put it on eBay.

But things got a lot more serious in Connecticut when a man was involved in a shooting and attempted robbery (2). But don't feel too bad for him because the guy, Michael Penkala, didn't actually want a PS3 – he just wanted to flog it on eBay for a profit. Luckily the shooter was later caught and arrested.

And even though PSM3 scribe Joel had a lovely time in Japan (see our feature on page 42), there's a dark side to the queues over there too. At the Bic Camera store in Akihabara, riots broke out (3).

Where next for console launches?
Will there ever be a new machine launched that a) has enough units in store, b) has lots of great games, and c) is reported fairly. We can but hope.

Elsewhere in America, there were further riots at the Circuit City store in Washington (4). But things were a little more sedate in San Francisco where staff from PC Gamer US (5) offered a powerful PC to anyone who agreed to leave the line and never touch a PlayStation 3 ever again. The guy who agreed, Neil, was even forced to sign a legally-binding contract.

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** March 2007

Games | Ps3 launch titles defy doubters – fact

PS3's review scores compare respectably to other console launches – and here's the proof...

Scores
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
Time
1995 PLAYSTATION
70.4% average score, nine games
Best: Warhawk - 89.4%
Worst: Total Eclipse Turbo – 47.5%
1996 NINTENDO 64
91.3% average score, two games
Best: Super Mario 64 - 95.8%
Worst: Pilot Wings - 86.8%
1999 DREAMCAST
74.3% average score, 19 games
Best: Soul Calibur - 96.4%
Worst: Mortal Kombat Gold - 56.5%
2000 PLAYSTATION 2
73.7% average score, 29 games
Best: SSX - 91.4%
Worst: Evergrace - 54.1%
2001 GAMECUBE
79.4% average score, 12 games
Best: Madden 2002 - 90%
Worst: Disney's Tarzan Untamed - 62.9%
2001 XBOX
73% average score, 19 games
Best: Halo - 95.7%
Worst: Shrek - 50.9%
2005
77.3% average score, 18 games
Best: Call Of Duty 2 - 90.1%
Worst: FIFA 06: Road To FIFA World Cup - 61.9%
1995 PLAYSTATION 3
73.4% average score, 13 games
Best: Resistance - 89.2%
Worst: Mobile Suit Gundam: Crossfire - 34.8%
2006 WII
71.3% average score, 20 games
Best: Legend Of Zelda: Twilight Princess - 96.2%
Worst: Happy Feet - 45%

(Scores based on review ranking site www.metacritic.com's averages)

ON THE DISC
Watch *Gran Turismo 5* on the disc this minute

The Opinionator

PSP is dying and it's *everybody's* fault

15 months after its debut, PSP is in danger of sinking without a trace. The UMD movie scene is practically dead. Listening to your music collection is a novelty overlooked in favour of the iPod. And the games – with the exception of classics like *LocoRoco*, *Lumines* and *Gitaroo Man Lives!* – are ports of stuff you've already played (or rather be playing) on PS2. This is inexcusable, because handheld gaming is far from dead – DS games pack originality by the bucketload, but PSP is the proverbial Jack of all trades and master of none. And there isn't a change in sight.

Any port...

It's not just Sony's fault. PSP is a quality piece of kit, yet developers are spending more time on ports than sailors on shore leave. Some publishers send out their titles, then we – almost without fail – say "If you've already got it on PS2 don't bother." So here's the solution: Sony, get someone on the case to make a clip-on device that goes on the slippy D-pad and poor analogue nubbin that make games like *Vice City Stories* playable without fear of arthritis. Developers: show some love in the games your making. Don't just stick a stripped-down PS2 version onto PSP, bolt on a few new cars or weapons, and expect us to enjoy it.

Future thrills

Publishers: tell us what's in development, what it's going to be like and why we should be getting all excited about it. In return, we'll tell everyone. Don't just pop a boxed copy in the post, cross your fingers and hope for the best. And you lot: when decent original games do come out – *like LocoRoco* – buy them in your droves, and ignore those stacks of yawnsome ports.

Together we can make a difference, and hopefully PSP won't hit its death bed before it's even learned to walk. **Nathan Irvine**

Myth-Buster

SEEN THIS?

Taking PS3 online will be a mess of multiple login systems

THE TRUTH

OK, so *Resistance: Fall Of Man* plays to its own rules somewhat by choosing to implement its own lobby services rather than utilise the ones provided by Sony, and does so rather well, but there's no particular sign at the moment that any other games are going to follow suit. Our experiences using PlayStation 3 online in the likes of *Ridge Racer 7* suggests that every other game is going to use Sony's lobbies and will utilise a single login. There are no plans for being able to track your friends' achievements across all their games and try to outdo them, sadly, but you should almost certainly be able to get PlayStation 3 online with just one username for all your different games. *Resistance* remains the only (slightly) odd one out – thankfully.

Thrill List

The latest news on PlayStation's hottest games, every issue

1 God Of War 2

Keeping PS2's magic alive

God Of War creator David Jaffe has recently started work on *God of War 3* for PS3. "I've been sitting down with my notebook and books and thinking about where the game could go," he says. But he's also applying the finishing touches to *God Of War 2*, due for release on PS2 next year. New features confirmed so far include the ability to fly on a pegasus, and a new magic power called the wind bow. There's also a strange unnamed attack where Kratos fires what look like laser beams from his arms. The God of War will have new magic at his disposal. Magic.

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** January 07

Slice and dice *God Of War 2*'s focus remains on dynamic, varied combat.

"Follow Snake as he sneaks round '70s South America"
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops page 14

Boss Fight The interactive 'rhythm' sections have been massively improved, so it's not all button-bashing combat.

2 Gran Turismo 5
Full and fat

What? No *Gran Turismo HD*? That's right, because Sony have cancelled it completely, probably in response to the outcry that the game would come with barely any content and you'd have to download all your tracks and cars from Sony Online. So Polyphony are holding the game back and releasing it as a proper, full-featured game, and they'll probably call it *Gran Turismo 5*. In the meantime, Sony will be releasing so-called 'concept demos' through their online service that will serve as a prologue to *GT5*, much like they did with *GT4: Concept* on PS2. Quite how much these will cost remains to be seen, but Turismaniacs will probably download them immediately regardless. The first one will be available on Christmas Eve.

Pub Sony | **Dev** Polyphony Digital | **ETA** Spring 2007

3 Battlefield: Bad Company
Now hard as iron

A new aiming system known as 'Ironsight' has been revealed in this, a *Battlefield* game specifically for next-gen consoles. As in real life, firing without aiming will send your bullets flying all over the place. Entering Ironsight mode reduces this, but blurs the screen around your sights so all you can see is what you're aiming at, leaving you open to side attacks. It's a clever idea and we reckon it'll make fighting feel like *actual* war. This'll be brilliant online.

Pub EA | **Dev** DICE | **ETA** 2007

4 White Knight Story
A story for the ages

Dragon Quest and *Dark Chronicle*, developed by Level 5, are two of the best RPGs on PS2, and *WKS* promises to achieve similar results on PS3. Akihiro Hino, the designer, says the game will be 50-60 hours long, with online elements to increase the lifespan. The combat is in real-time and the visuals are unbelievable, with sweeping landscapes and gorgeously subtle lighting. We're drooling already.

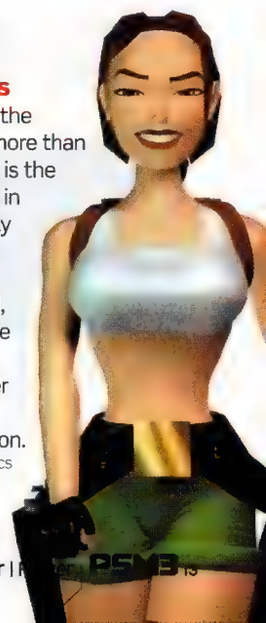
Pub Sony | **Dev** Level 5 | **ETA** 2007

Top to bottom *Battlefield: Bad Company* and *White Knight Story*.

5 Tomb Raider Anniversary
Old dog, new tricks

This is a PS2 remake of the original *Raider*, but it's more than that. The big difference is the engine. It's the same as in *Legend*, so it looks lovely and Lara's movement is more fluid. A lot of the level design has altered, as with new controls the first game was too simple. So expect bigger stages based on the classics of Peru and so on.

Pub Eidos | **Dev** Crystal Dynamics
ETA April 2007



The last minute shots of big importance

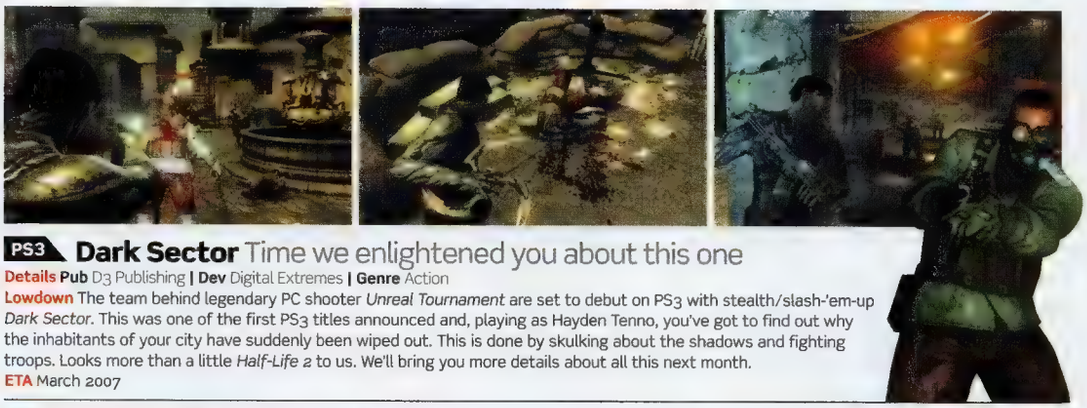
The freshest pics, squeezed in as we go to press

PS3 Sega Rally Battling *MotorStorm* for 'mud physics' gold

Details **Pub** Sega | **Dev** Sega Racing Studio | **Genre** Driving

Lowdown While *Colin McRae: DIRT* is expected to be the pinnacle of rallying, Sega's upcoming racer sticks two fingers up at its seriousness. *Sega Rally* maintains its arcade feel, although we'll still get some real-time track effects – the ground is churned up and the grooves remain from lap to lap – for the realism nuts among us. There's also a selection of licensed motors, from Subaru to Peugeot and Mitsubishi. Shall we make a 'it could be rally good' joke? Nah, let's not.

ETA March



PS3 Dark Sector Time we enlightened you about this one

Details **Pub** D3 Publishing | **Dev** Digital Extremes | **Genre** Action

Lowdown The team behind legendary PC shooter *Unreal Tournament* are set to debut on PS3 with stealth/slash-'em-up *Dark Sector*. This was one of the first PS3 titles announced and, playing as Hayden Tenno, you've got to find out why the inhabitants of your city have suddenly been wiped out. This is done by skulking about the shadows and fighting troops. Looks more than a little *Half-Life 2* to us. We'll bring you more details about all this next month.

ETA March 2007

PS3 Rogue Warrior Sorry, Dick *who*?

Details **Pub** TBC | **Dev** Bethedsa | **Genre** FPS

Lowdown Forget Andy McNab, the new real-life action hero du jour is Dick Marcinko. The former Navy SEAL is helping Bethedsa create a new PS3 war game starring his good self. Seeing North and South Korea engaged in bloody war, you have to escape with your buddies. Every mission is open-ended, meaning you can tackle it in anyway you see fit, and there will be ten different online multi-player modes and over 200 maps to fight it out on to keep things fresh.

ETA May 2007

PSP Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops Proper handheld *MGS* is here

Details **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami | **Genre** Action

Lowdown *Portable Ops* is the missing link between *MGS3* and *MGS4*, and follows Naked Snake as he sneaks his way around '70s South America on the trail of the FOX unit. Interestingly, you'll be able to recruit buddies to join your gang in the single-player story and then take your band of stealthy men online as you battle via Wi-Fi. You'll even be able to trade characters with other players. Skill. We'll have the exclusive review of this next month.

ETA March 2007

The Optimist

Don't worry. Be happy

No UK PS3 release details? *Great!*

Sony's refusal to name a date or price for the PS3's UK launch is a sign of strength. Yes. By *pretending* they don't care about gamers, it makes Sony look all tough and arrogant, which boosts their reputation. After all, Tony Montana from Scarface didn't become a success by keeping people informed, and everything seemed to work out well for him. In this crazy, mixed-up, world the only way to clarify your message is with confusion, like those brilliant Third Place adverts they used for the launch of PS2.

Instant satisfaction

I, for one, don't *want* to know how much to save up for PS3. After all, if Sony committed to the mooted £425 price now, we'd only be making comparisons to the US price of $599, which is clearly a much higher number, causing a dangerous level of demand in the UK. I sincerely doubt Sony will miss the planned March release, and all the rumours of global stock shortages are only to make us more excited when it definitely comes out. One thing is certain – Sony definitely aren't pretending the UK PS3 launch is on schedule to stop people buying an Xbox 360 for Christmas, then issuing bad news in the New Year. That would be too predictable, see. Love you, Sony!

EMAIL PSM3
How do you feel about waiting for PS3? Mail us: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

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ON THE DISC
Keep an eye on future discs for *Burnout 5* footage

Why We Love...

David Jaffe

Fiery *God Of War* man flies flag for western developers

What has he done?

Jaffe worked on Sony's *Twisted Metal* series, a car combat game whose heavy rock influence delighted US audiences, but limited its UK appeal. His next big game was the epic *God Of War* (92% PSM2#62).

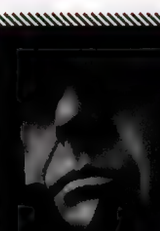
Why we like him?

For making us wait for *God Of War* – "We playtested the crap out of it," reveals Jaffe – until every second felt polished, rather than rushing it out to beat deadlines. Jaffe is candid enough to admit the combat system is "worse than *Devil May Cry*", and claims the Hades level was 'shit', even though its probably the most 'perfect' game – at least, in terms of pacing – this side of *Resident Evil 4*. Jaffe's equally candid about the games industry – "Sometimes I think games can be the next great entertainment medium, other days it's like the porn business" – and has the balls to say what he really thinks about games journalists, calling them 'vultures' who need to distance themselves from the industry to provide more critical insight. In short, he's honest, passionate and fiercely creative.

What's he doing now?

Finishing *Calling All Cars*, a 108op game for PS3's download service, but *GOW3* rumours persist...

Who are you?
Name David Jaffe **Age** Unknown
Role Producer SCEA
Key Games *Twisted Metal, Twisted Metal: Black, Jet Moto, Kinetica* and *God Of War.*



The Insider

He's the man who knows too much...

Midway are working on a next-gen sequel to PS2 shooter *Area 51*, called **Blacksite: Area 51**. Early screenshots are already circulating on the internet, but the aim is on stripping back the 'spectacular' to focus on lifelike squad AI. Your team will have a moral system, multiple facial animations and three breathing states for greater realism. Advanced AI powers the 'one click' squad ordering system, so you've only got to point at a ladder or jeep for your men to climb, or clamber, aboard.

The plot takes the original game to its twisted conclusion – brutal experiments were performed on homeless folk and drifters deep underground Area 51, and years later, the once-human Reborn have turned against their captors and stormed the surface. The game currently has the washed out, realistic, palette of *MGS4*, with suitably horrific aliens, including snakes and insect-style mutations. Midway are also rumoured to be working on a top secret next-gen WWII game.

"*Killzone 2* is 'more impressive' than the 2005 E3 demo"

Sony's **Killzone 2** is in full production, according to Dutch newspaper de Volksrant. The report claims there are currently 120 people working on the sequel – three times more than the original – and the budget is greater than the most expensive film in Dutch history, Paul Verhoeven's WWII thriller Black Book (which cost $21m). *Killzone* director Arjan Brusee claims the game will be translated into 20 languages, with additional levels downloadable via the PS Store. Recently, Sony software boss Phil Harrison claimed the game was 'more impressive' in places than the infamous 2005 E3 demo, later confirmed as a CGI movie, and not game footage.

Square Enix claim that the much anticipated **Final Fantasy XIII** is only 3% complete, in an interview with Japanese magazine Dengeki. The game's graphics system, the 'white engine' is only in its initial stages, with little, or no gameplay, set in place. The game won't see the light of day in Japan until 2008, prompting a likely 2009 UK release.

The PS3 version of **SingStar** will have 300 songs available for initial download, with new songs available on a weekly basis. The PS3 camera will enable you to film your perfomances and share them, YouTube-style, on the PS Network – with the prospect of 'live' events to follow. Next generation **EyeToy** is equally intriguing, with Minority Report-style music and media manipulation from 'floating' menus, plus high-level integration of CGI and real-life footage, with players donning robotic helmets, commanding squads and interacting with on-screen virtual pets, plus 'live' music playing games.

Will **GTA4** be set in New York? That's the latest – totally unfounded – internet rumour, with the Italian Mafia apparently facing off against the Russian mafia in the late '90s/ modern day. The series PS2 debut, *GTA3*, was also set in a parody of New York, Liberty City, but apart from the neat symmetry, that's as factual as it gets. More insider rumblings in the New Year...

You're in the 'Zone Even passing civilians are being press-ganged into working on *Killzone 2*. (Not really).

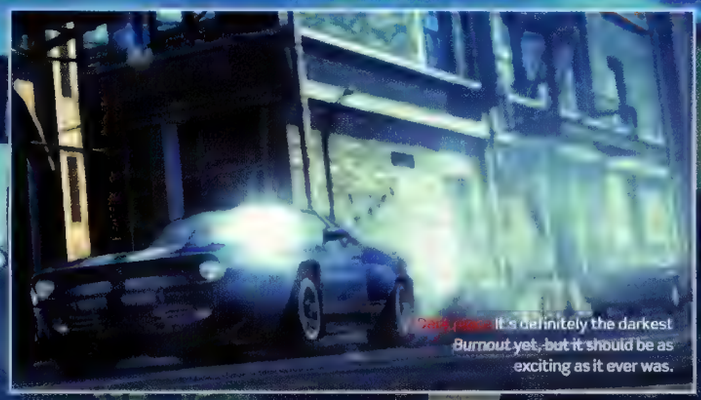
"We asked - you voted. It's the Reader Awards"
Is *Canis* game of the year? page 18

PS3 UPDATE

Burnout 5 smashes onto PS3

With brand new crash physics that let you literally tear a car in half

First thing's first - all the 'screenshots' on this page are actually just concept images. The final version will probably look similarly great, but don't think these are in-game. They aren't. But apparently they reflect the series' new visual direction - more subdued, stylish and strangely '70s-inspired. But from what we've seen of the new crashes - screenshots from a technical demo released by Criterion - cars bend, twist and fold to an insane degree. But regardless of how technically complex it is, *Burnout 5 will* be brilliant and faster than your eyeballs will ever be able to cope with. Lots more next month.



Dark days It's definitely the darkest *Burnout* yet, but it should be as exciting as it ever was.

Crash and burn Even a Kwik-Fit fitter's gonna have a problem with this one.

The PSM3 Wrong-Righter

EMAIL PSM3 @
Spotted some Bertie Bollax in PSM3? Tell us:
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Rubbing the wax-hot polish of truth over past issues

YAKUZA BOX SHOT — ☒ WRONG

"The amount of stuff you can do in fights is amazing. It's really varied."
Yakuza
"What a repetitive waste of time. The plot makes no sense either."

"A crime adventure with style. Bling is out, finely-tailored white suits and tattoos are in," we trumpeted, illustrating the quote with a box shot of a *silver car* driving through a fence. Yes, we printed a box shot of *Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions* instead of *Yakuza*. Now that's class.

IDIOTIC BALLS-UP!

PSM82 page 41

LOCO ROCO CHRISTMAS GAME — ☑ RIGHT

When we broke the news that "Sony will be giving away a Christmas-themed *LocoRoco* level on www.yourpsp.co.uk," we weren't lying. The festive level is live on the site right now. But they *did* ignore our plea to make the lead character a Christmas pudding. If Easter doesn't see egg-shaped Locos, we'll be absolutely *fuming*.

PSM82 page 117

RIDGE RACER 7 RULES — ☒ WRONG

"This is the game you'll use to justify buying your PS3," we gushed after the game's triumphant unveiling at the Tokyo Game Show, unaware that a) We'd seen the best level in the game, b) A lot of the content was in *Ridge 6* on Xbox 360 and c) When the 1080p novelty wears off, it's essentially the same game again.

SKIDDING OFF!

PSM81 page 10

ON THE DISC
See Metal Gear 4 on this month's disc

PSM3 SPECIAL REPORT

It's The PSM3 Reader Awards

We asked... you voted. Here's your highlights of 2006

Did we make this up?" queried one team member as the Greatest Moment of 2006 was announced. Not only is your outright winner shared by 85.71% of the PSM3 team, but we were overwhelmed by the volume and enthusiasm of your responses. Once again, thanks for your support this year. And the winners are...

Best Character

1) Snake

Kojima makes him an OAP with a 'tache – and Snake still emerges clear winner.

2) Jimmy Hopkins

We thought *Canis*'s protagonist might win, you know, given Jimmy's attitude and way with the girls (and boys).

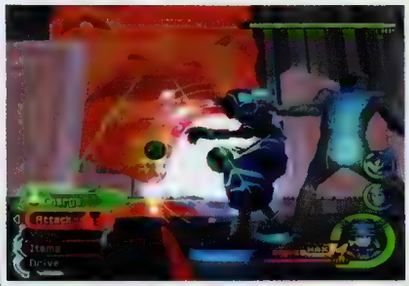
3) Agent 47

Old slaphead's ultimate revenge at the end of *Blood Money* was one of 2006s finest moments.

Best PS2 Game

1) Canis Canem Edit

Our own game of the year is your Number One – *GTA* with wedgies was a guaranteed hit.



2) Kingdom Hearts 2

Squenix's finest moment yet? A lot of you think so.

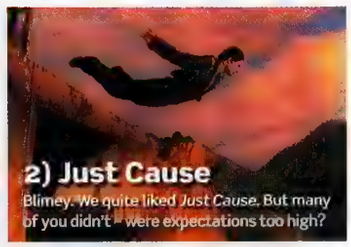
3) MGS3: Subsistence

Online Snake? Loads of you said 'yes, please'.

Biggest disappointment

1) PS3 delayed in Europe

Obviously. Heartbreaking in every way. Except literally.



2) Just Cause

Blimey. We quite liked *Just Cause*. But many of you didn't – were expectations too high?

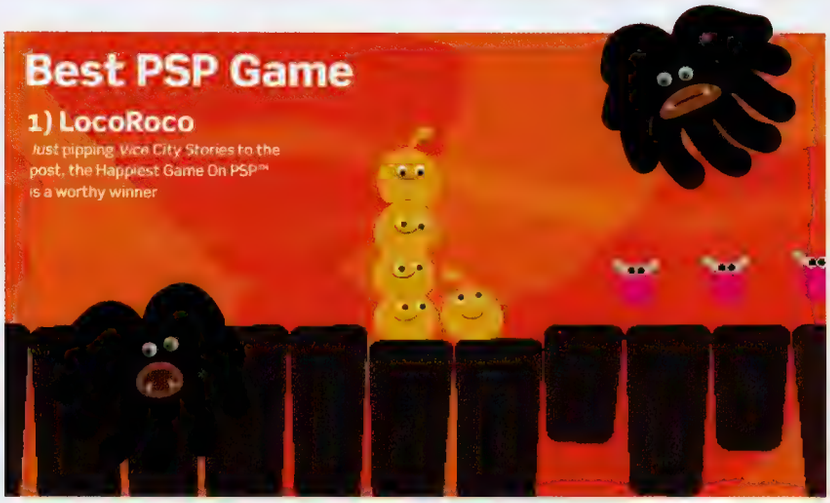
3) FFVII: Dirge Of Cerberus

This, on the other hand, deserves a stern kicking.

Best PSP Game

1) LocoRoco

Just pipping Vice City Stories to the post, the Happiest Game On PSP™ is a worthy winner

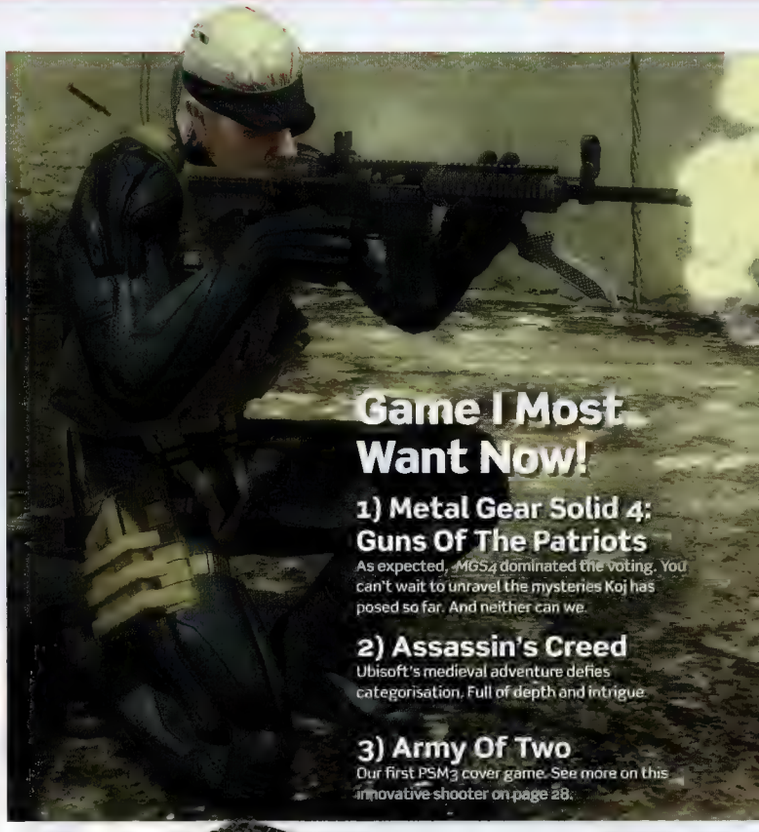


2) GTA: Vice City Stories

Better than *Liberty City Stories* and one of PSP's finest.

3) Tekken: Dark Resurrection

Miles behind the top two, but just squeaked home.



Game I Most Want Now!

1) Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots

As expected, *MGS4* dominated the voting. You can't wait to unravel the mysteries Koj has posed so far. And neither can we.

2) Assassin's Creed

Ubisoft's medieval adventure defies categorisation. Full of depth and intrigue.

3) Army Of Two

Our first PSM3 cover game. See more on this innovative shooter on page 28.

Best Graphics

1) Black

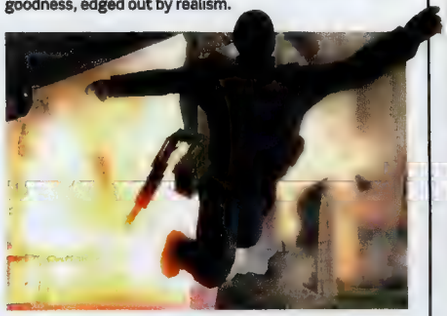
We didn't see this coming, but you voted in droves to nominate *Black* as PS2's sexiest-looking game of 2006 – and fair play, it's a real technical feat.

2) MGS3: Subsistence

That new free-roaming camera system was the gloss on an already tremendous looking game.

3) Kingdom Hearts 2

We thought this would be top. Slick and beautiful Disney goodness, edged out by realism.



Greatest moment

1) The Colossi (Shadow of the Colossus)

Thirteen. No, fifteen. *Definitely*, five... You've all got your favourite encounters in Team Ico's epic, but *Shadow Of The Colossus* dominated voting, and rightly so.

2) Sora Vs 1000 Heartless (Kingdom Hearts 2)

"How the hell did Square Enix do that?" you all asked of *Kingdom Hearts 2*. We don't know, but we're glad they did.

3) Luke, I'd tell you I am your father, but I've no mouth... (Lego Star Wars 2)

...so instead little Lego Vader offers photographic evidence. The acting (with both characters mute and one in a helmet) make this priceless.

Best Soundtrack

1) Vice City Stories

Do you like Phil Collins *that* much?

2) Guitar Hero

We shredded our fingers playing this. And again with the sequel.

3) Shadow Of The Colossus

Some absolutely epic orchestral scores accompany an absolutely epic game.

Best multi-player game

1) Pro Evo 6

As cliched as it is true, as engaging as it is frustrating, *PES6* is the only game we play *every* lunchtime – and you love it even more.

2) MGS3: Subsistence

One of online gaming's standard-bearers. If only it was all this way. We're looking at you, *Splinter Cell*.

3) Lego Star Wars 2

Nice to see some co-op gaming here. Games don't always have to be competitive, you know.

Best publisher

1) Rockstar

Quelle surprise. *Canis* and *Vice City* propel Rockstar to the top of the pile once again.

2) Square Enix

Kingdom Hearts 2's fervent fans put in a strong show of support for Squenix.

3) Capcom

None of their games appear in these charts, but *God Hand* and *Okami*, among others, made 2006 a strong year for Capcom. Although you'll have to wait until *next* year to play them here.

PS3

Pub 2K Games | **Dev** Starbreeze
Players 1 | **Genre** FPS
FYI Comic-inspired horror

ON THE DISC
Links more of *The Darkness* on the disc next time

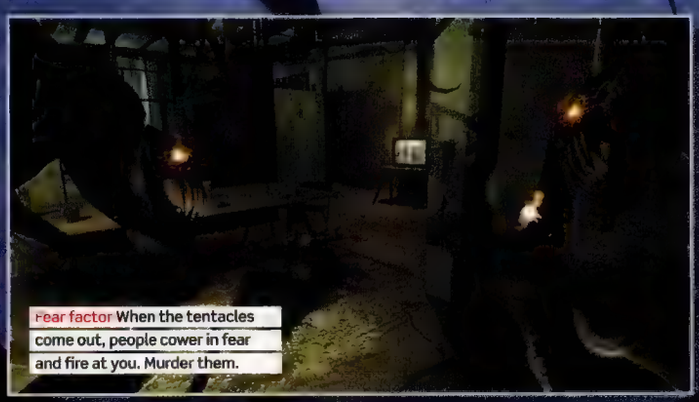
ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE DARK?

Don't be - in *The Darkness* it's your friend...

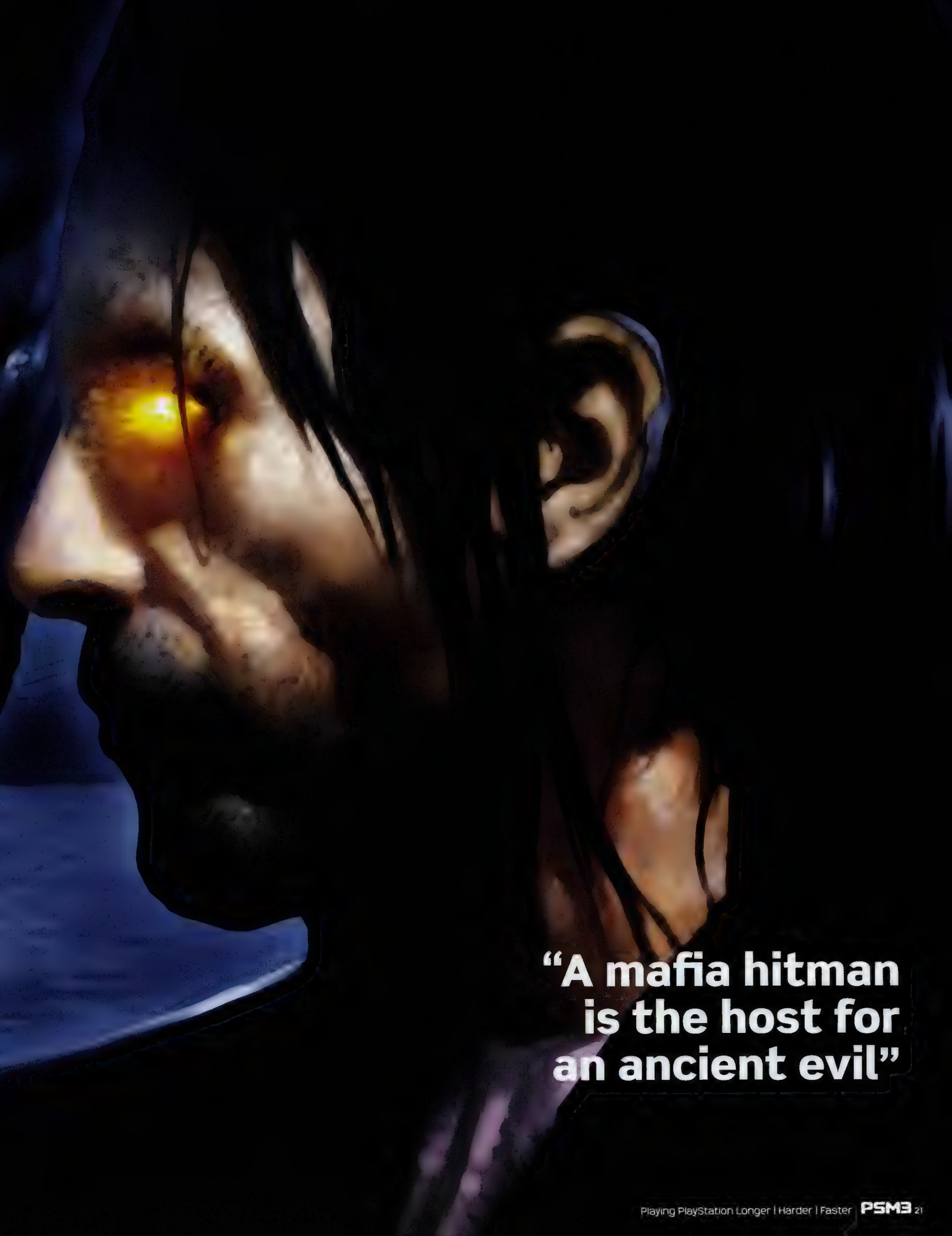
The Darkness may be based on a comic book, but Jackie Estacado is no superhero. He's a violent foul-mouthed mafia hitman with no discernable morals. He just happens to be acting host for the Darkness, an ageless evil that's passed down the family line and grants the bearer unbelievable powers. He can summon cackling demons to do his bidding, throw heavy objects around with an enormous tentacle and tear men to fleshy pieces in the blink of an eye. But the stinger is, he can only use his powers in the dark.

The story goes that Jackie has been betrayed by his uncle Paulie, who just happens to be one of the most important and powerful mafia bosses in New York. So not only does he have to deal with the Darkness that's slowly consuming him, he's also a wanted man. Jackie, understandably, wants revenge, and even with his powers, getting to someone as protected as Paulie is going to take a lot of effort, a lot of fighting and a lot of smashing people up with tentacles. Like the Crow, the Hulk and other similar comic book stories, Jackie's loss of control while using his powers play a big part in the story. Because, essentially, he's just a normal bloke. He didn't ask to be the Darkness' host.

The game is primarily a first-person shooter, but it's also a kind of survival horror, the twist



Fear factor When the tentacles come out, people cower in fear and fire at you. Murder them.



“A mafia hitman is the host for an ancient evil”

being that *you* are the horror. You strafe, you jump and you fire dual pistols like in any other first-person shooter, but hanging over your shoulders are the two grinning faces of the Darkness – black HR Giger-style beasts that drool and snarl as you wreak havoc on the streets of New York. Visually, it's a real next-gen powerhouse. The lighting and shadows that play such an important role in the game are natural and

"The Darklings will follow you, sawing enemies' heads off"

dynamic, the characters look amazing and the physics-heavy levels give you reams of stuff to knock about with your tentacles.

Alone in the dark

The supernatural Darkness powers set the game apart from other first-person shooters, while the script is completely faithful to the graphic novels and the very idea of being a mafioso infused with the powers of an ancient, uncontrollable evil is mouthwatering. And that all means that *The Darkness* is one of the most exciting prospects on PS3. From the amazing opening scene where you're in the back of a car that's tearing through a packed underground road tunnel, bashing into cars and firing at cops, to the amazing wartime levels and the Darkness powers, this is one game that's worth getting excited about.

Darkling, I love you

Whenever Jackie shoots out a light and it starts to spark, pressing Ⓐ summons up a Darkling. The Darklings are mutated beasts that spawn from mankind's sickest, most tainted souls, and they'll follow you around, mercilessly slaying your enemies. Or just sawing their heads off.

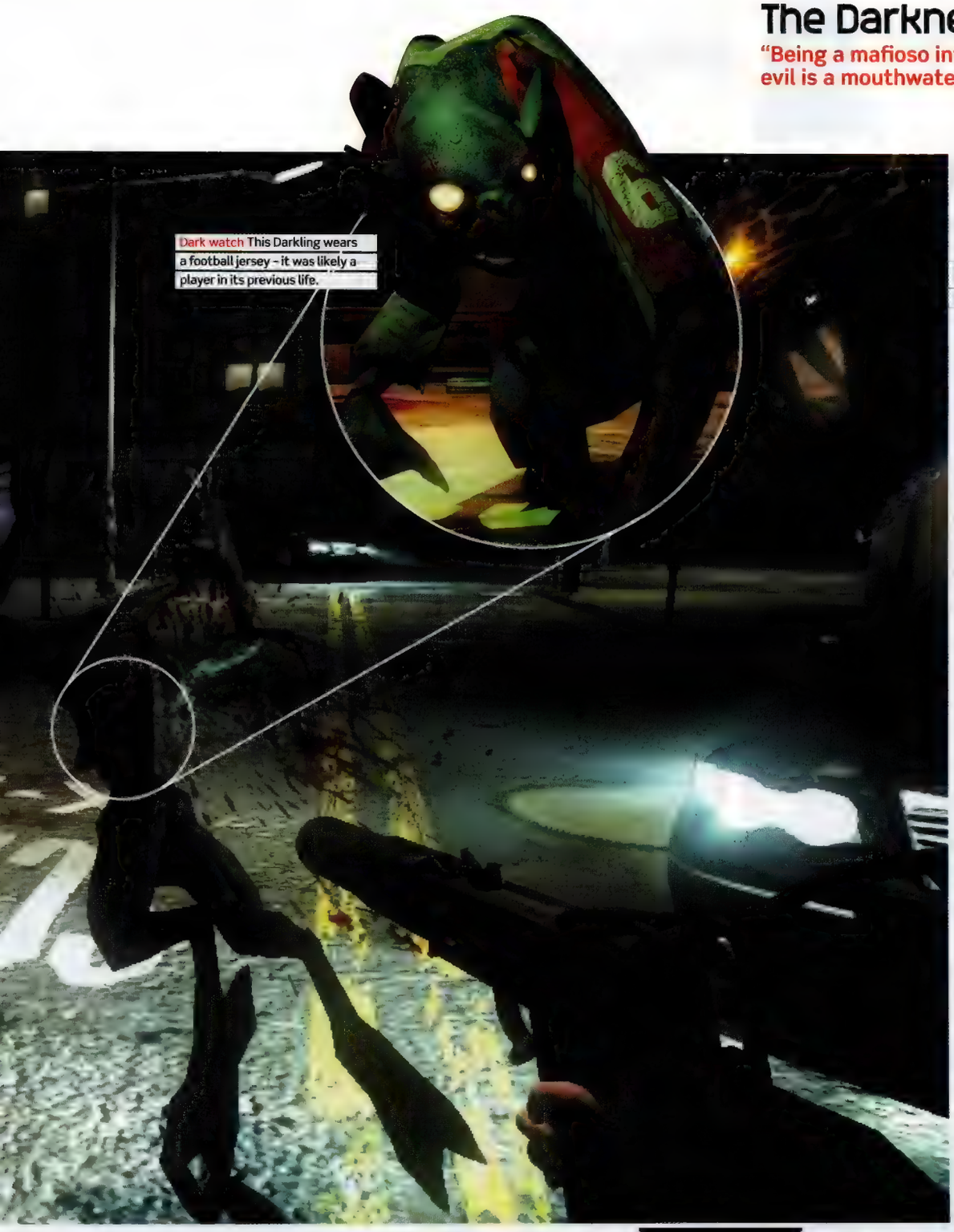
Blast chance If your Darkness powers are drained, you'll have to rely on your trusty shotgun.

Lights out

The Darkness' game engine has amazingly dynamic lighting, which as well as making everything look gorgeous, is a core element of the gameplay. Jackie can't use the Darkness in the light, so every time you enter a room full of enemies your first goal should be to kill the lights. You can thrust your tentacle forward to smash lamps and street lights, charging up your Darkness powers in the process. But this isn't *Splinter Cell* and you won't spend your play time skulking about in blackness - Jackie can see in the dark thanks to his powers, leaving his enemies confused and helpless. As we suspected, later in the game there are levels with light sources you can't easily destroy, meaning that you'll have to be a little more tactical.

The Darkness

"Being a mafioso infused with ancient evil is a mouthwatering prospect"



Dark watch This Darkling wears a football jersey – it was likely a player in its previous life.

Q&A

Jens Andersson, Starbreeze Studios

***The Darkness'* designer talks us through the game**

Of all the movies/comics/licenses in the world, why choose to make a game of The Darkness?

It's very dark – which we like – and pretty brutal – which we also like – but the thing that made us pick The Darkness was the story and the supernatural elements. Most of the game and the comic take place in New York, but the New York in The Darkness is a world most people don't see. Then you have Jackie Estacado, who is the perfect lead for a videogame, especially the kind of videogame we want to do.

What technology have you been able to bring across from *Chronicles Of Riddick* on Xbox?

With *Riddick*, we had already done one of the big leaps needed for a next-generation game. We developed an engine where everything was built from millions of polygons and was rendered using per-pixel lighting, normal-mapping and had dynamic shadows. Of course, now we have a lot more power under the hood and a lot of the limitations we had in *Riddick* are now gone. We've also continued developing the engine with a bunch of new shiny features like semi-deferred rendering, light-field mapping, HDR, rigid-body physics and cloth.

Which aspect of adapting the comic book has been the hardest to do?

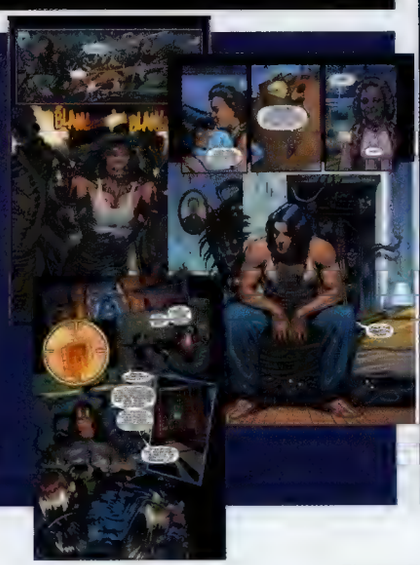
The Darkness powers are probably the thing that was hardest to do. In the comic, they aren't very well defined and Jackie can do some stuff in some issues and some other things in others. This made it harder to design the game, since we had to invent mechanics that worked for the game but had the look and feel of the comic. But it also gave us a lot of freedom to decide how we wanted things to work which probably made it better in the end. At least, we certainly hope so.

Darkness comics

The graphic novels that inspired the game

Created in 1996 by David Wohl, Marc Silvestri and Garth Ennis, The Darkness has spawned a series of graphic novels and crossovers with other characters, including Batman. It has sold over a million copies worldwide and, although not as popular as Marvel and DC's output, still has a large cult following in the US. There's even talk of a movie, produced by the same team who made The Crow, a similar story of dark powers.

The good news is that you don't have to go to Waterstones and buy the expensive books of collected issues – in the game you find pages scattered around the levels. Find them all and you can read the comics via an in-game viewer. We're told every issue will be available, but this hasn't been confirmed. Still, it's a good opportunity for some background on the characters and a reason to explore the levels thoroughly.

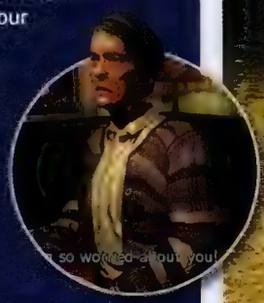


The missions

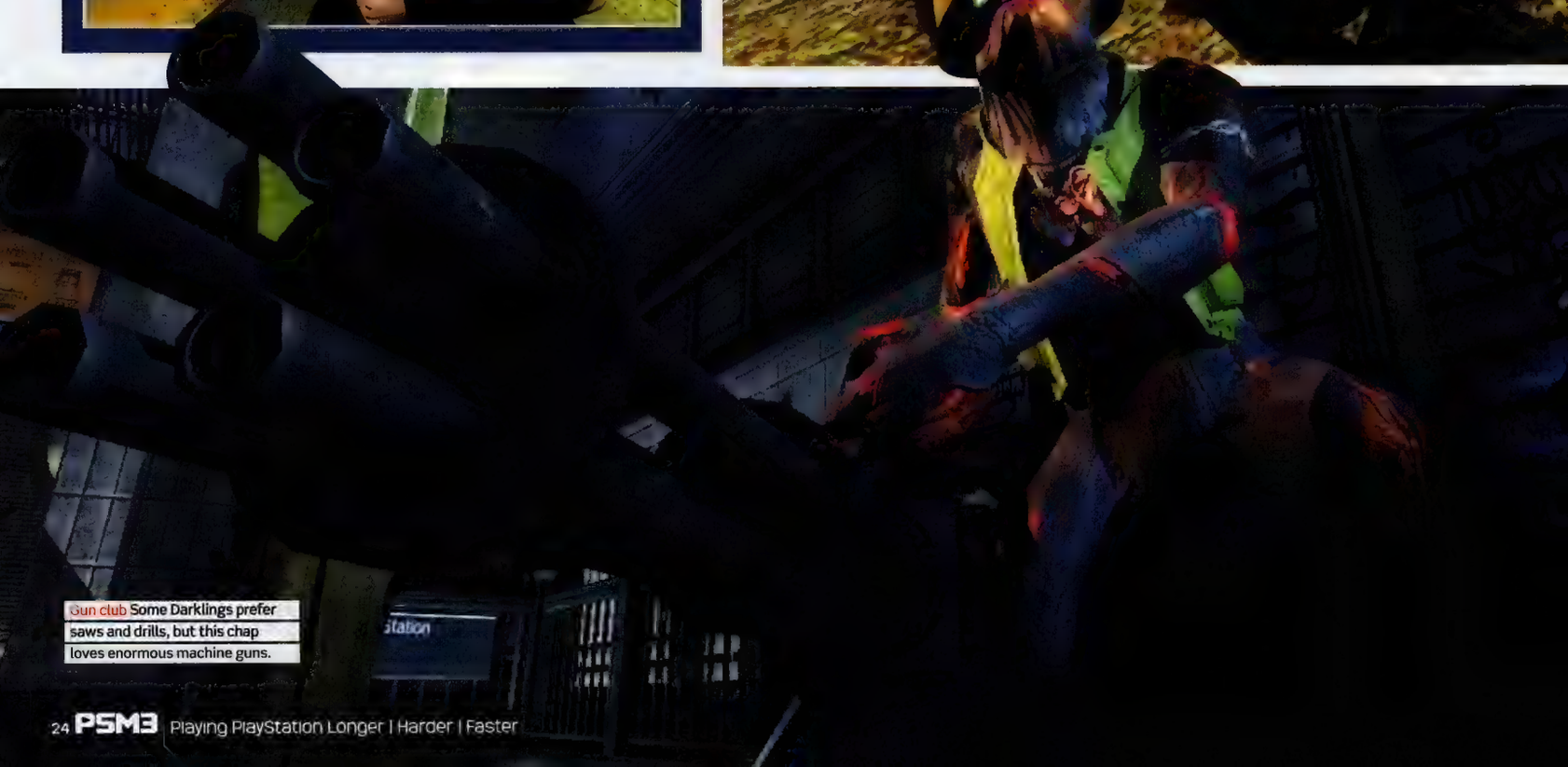
It's not all linear shooting and killing in *The Darkness*, you know

One of the most refreshing things about *The Darkness* is how non-linear some of the levels are. For example, one level takes place in a seedy New York backstreet. There are various buildings you can enter, some of which play host to optional missions that earn you new items and guns, as well as those comic pages we mentioned earlier. There are dozens of people to chat to, and depending on how you behave or interact with them, they'll either help or hinder you. So if you're chatting to a tramp giving you vital info, don't suddenly activate your Darkness powers and start swinging bins about with your tentacles – he'll probably run off.

But of course, there's a main focus to each level. Luckily, there are multiple ways of solving each problem. You can be sneaky and send your creeping Darkness through air vents to silently kill enemies, but you can also use Darklings to unlock hard-to-reach doors for you. There are dozens of varied ways to approach puzzles and problems, and you're really only limited by your imagination.



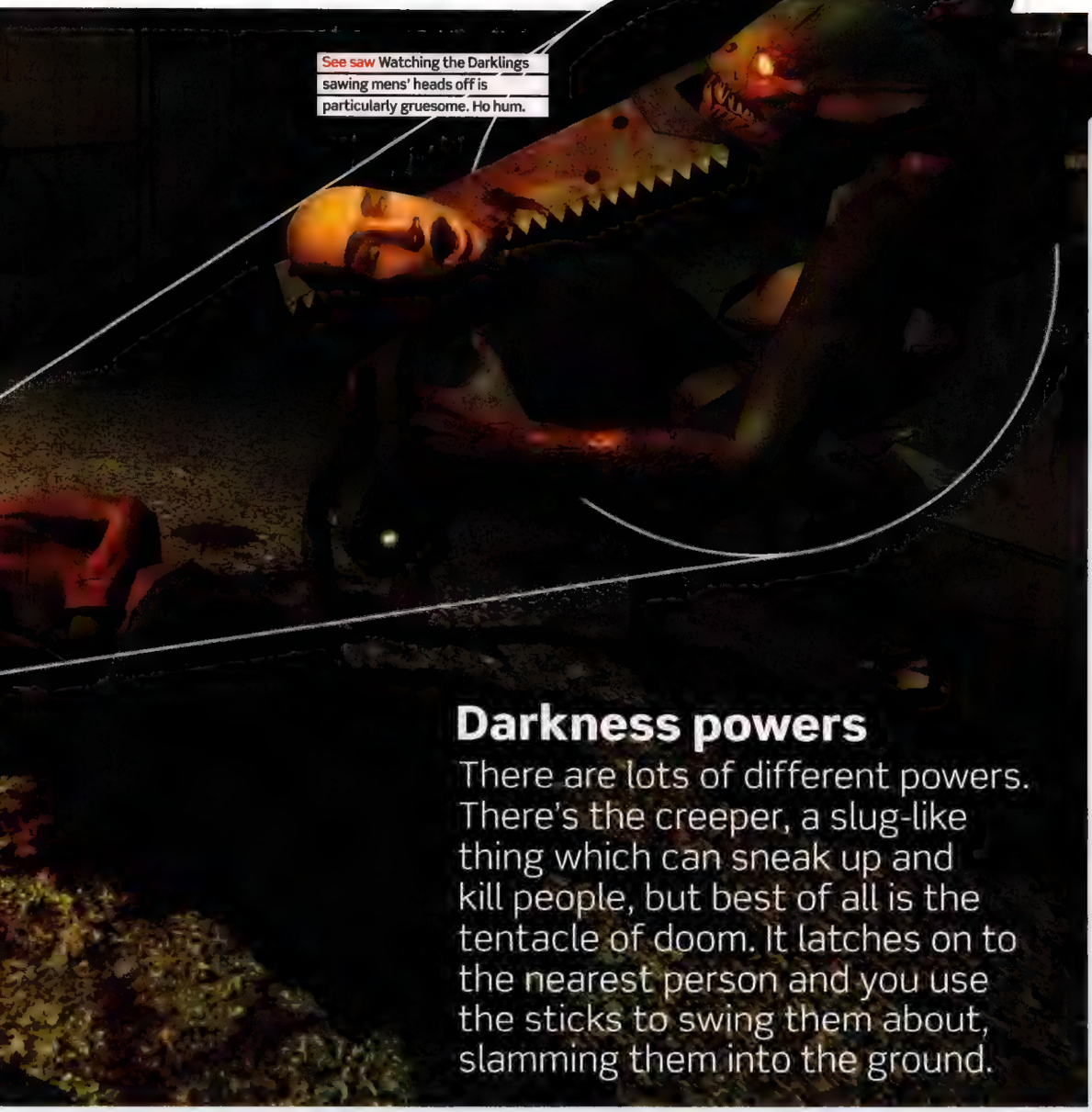
Cut above The story is told via cut-scenes and interactive in-game stuff. Very absorbing.



Gun club Some Darklings prefer saws and drills, but this chap loves enormous machine guns.

The Darkness

"You can send your Darkness through air vents to kill enemies"



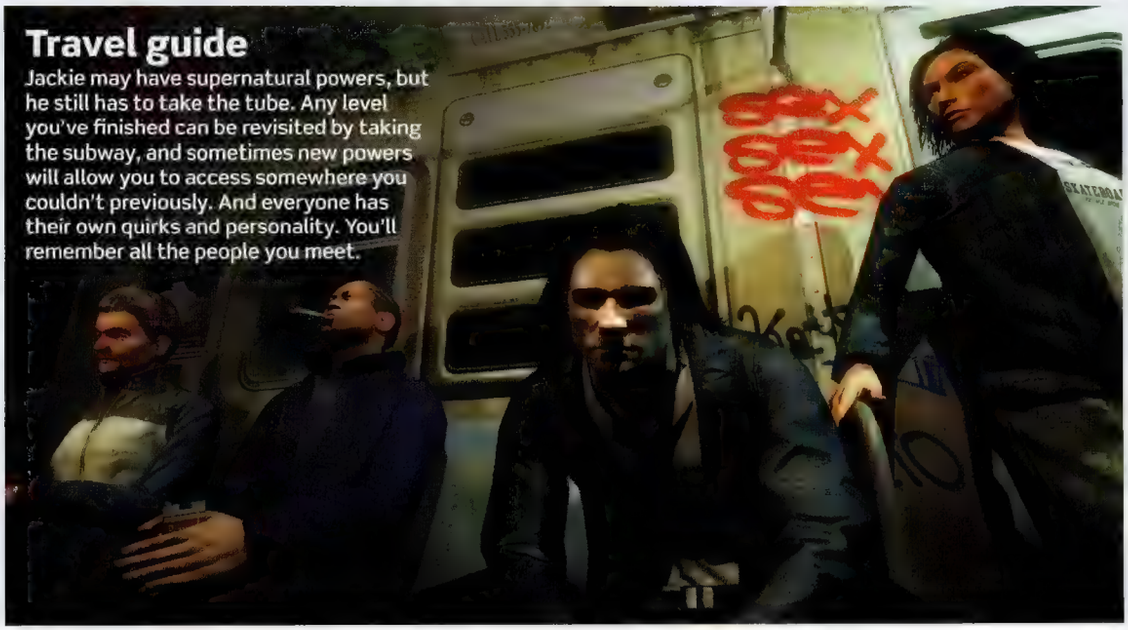
See saw Watching the Darklings sawing mens' heads off is particularly gruesome. Ho hum.

Darkness powers

There are lots of different powers. There's the creeper, a slug-like thing which can sneak up and kill people, but best of all is the tentacle of doom. It latches on to the nearest person and you use the sticks to swing them about, slamming them into the ground.

Travel guide

Jackie may have supernatural powers, but he still has to take the tube. Any level you've finished can be revisited by taking the subway, and sometimes new powers will allow you to access somewhere you couldn't previously. And everyone has their own quirks and personality. You'll remember all the people you meet.



Anything that was too freaky or unusual to make it into the game?
Actually, I think we have all the freaky and unusual stuff we could come up with still in the game. We aren't really self-censoring ourselves and are just trying to do all the things that we think would make the best game. Still, this is not a title for children and this fact will be reflected in the ratings.

What elevates *The Darkness* above other first-person shooters?
Our strength is the rest of the game. When you say FPS I tend to think about just shooting. What we are doing is in many respects an adventure game. There are a lot of genre-blending and story-elements. We give a fair focus on the pure shooting parts as well, and do a couple of innovations there that I think people will enjoy, but the thing that drives the player will not be the traditional shooting. And, of course, there are the Darkness powers.

Why make The Darkness into an FPS?
Partly because we wanted to do another first-person game after *Riddick*, but having the game in first-person is something that we felt suited The Darkness .

Any graphical effects or tricks you're particularly proud of?
The lighting engine is great – we've evolved the technology we had in *Riddick* to be better at rendering more complex outdoor scenery with a more ambient style while keeping the ability to take out the lights around you.

Anything that PS3 has allowed you to do that 360 can't?
We've intentionally tried to make the two versions as similar as possible. Still, it is possible that we will take advantage of the Blu-ray to cram more extra-content on the disc as we can.

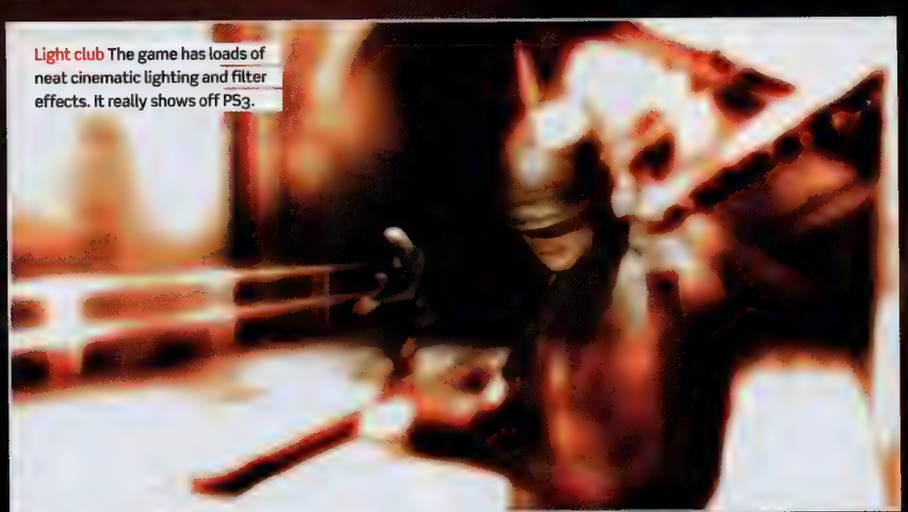
How will *The Darkness* work online? What support have you received from Sony?
There will be an online multi-player with a number of different modes. Most of the multi-player stuff is still being

"The atmosphere of wartime France is brilliant"

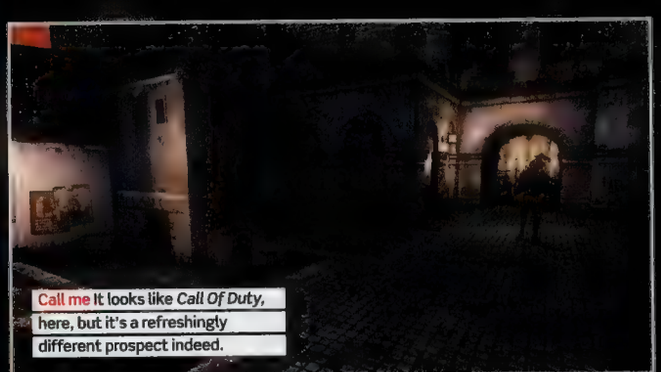
God of war in the context of a battlefield, the minigun-toting Darkling looks right at home.

The other world

The game isn't all set on the grimy streets of mafia-controlled New York City – there are flashback sequences featuring Jackie Estacado's father during his service in World War One, and how he used the Darkness to mercilessly slaughter hundreds of German soldiers. It's a real change of scenery and the grim atmosphere of trench warfare in rainy wartime France is brilliantly-realised. There's a Darkness graphic novel devoted to this story.



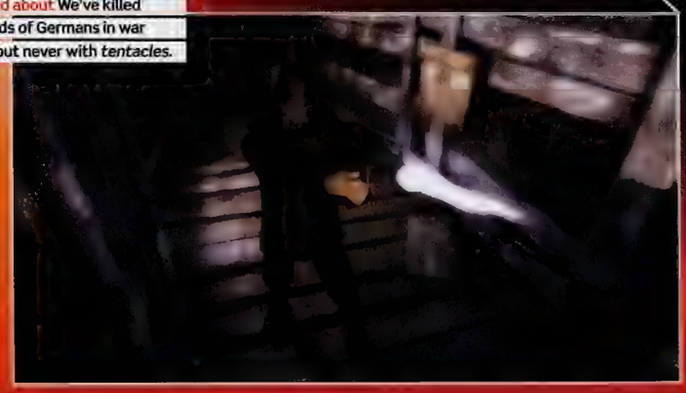
Light club The game has loads of neat cinematic lighting and filter effects. It really shows off PS3.



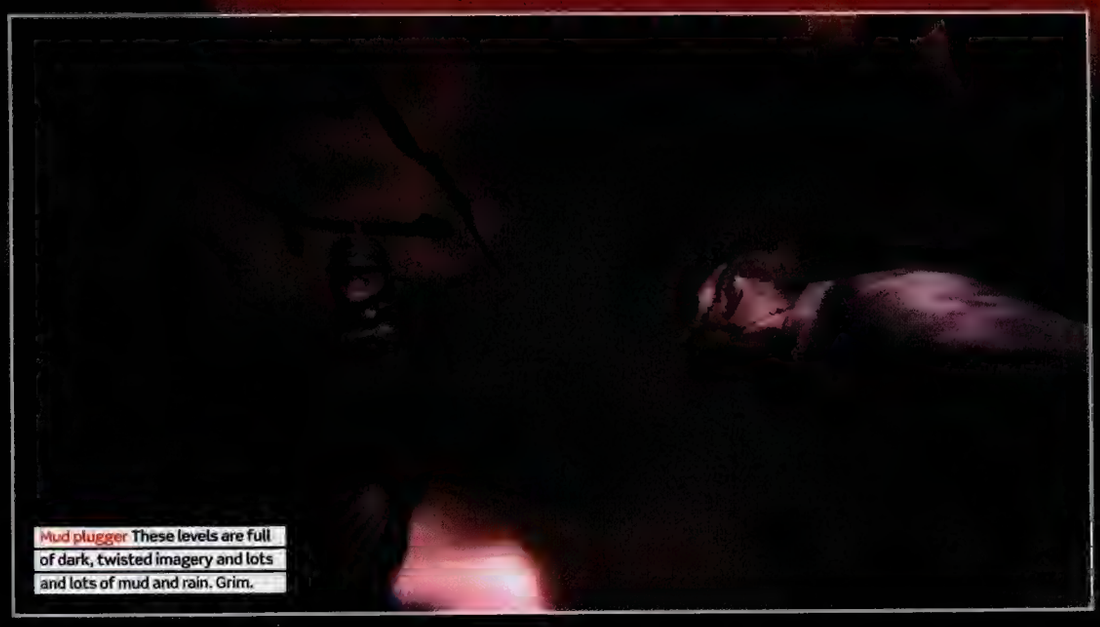
Call me It looks like *Call Of Duty*, here, but it's a refreshingly different prospect indeed.

The Darkness

"The Darkness was used to slaughter hundreds of German soldiers"



Kraut and about We've killed thousands of Germans in war games, but never with *tentacles*.



Mud plugger These levels are full of dark, twisted imagery and lots and lots of mud and rain. Grim.

worked on, but we will have some news for you on this fairly soon.

In a recent interview, you talked of giving the Darklings a "more unique personality" - how will they express themselves? Can you give examples?

The Darklings are collected throughout the game and they differ widely in personality. They reside in really evil characters and when you bring them out, they keep some properties for their host. One example is a grumpy marine while another is an old mental patient and the Darklings will most definitely affect their behaviour.

What's the grizzliest attack performed by the Darklings?

One of the Darklings is the berserker, which has a variety of weapons. Amongst other weapons, he has an industrial jackhammer that he carries on his back until he gets close enough. I guess you can imagine the rest.

Is Jackie just a normal guy until The Darkness powers take over? Could he be stopped by a few bullets? What other superhero/villain do you think he most closely resembles in terms of strength and ability?

Yes, before being possessed by the Darkness, Jackie is as normal a person as you can be while being a hitman was raised by the mob. The closest thing I can think of to compare him to is the Hulk and like the Hulk, Jackie feels he doesn't have control over his powers and wants to do something about it.

If Jackie is so tough, who's going to prove his biggest challenge? Do you have amazing boss battles planned?

While there is much stuff like this in the comic, we've mostly focused on Jackie's fight to get back in control after being possessed by the Darkness and his struggle against his uncle Paulie, who is the godfather of the mafia-family and has betrayed him. We've tried to stay away from classic boss-battles, but we won't reveal too much at this stage as we don't want to spoil your surprise.

PS3

Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Players 1-2 | **Genre** Shooter
FYI Shiny-looking co-op blaster

ON THE DISC
We'll have more on *Army Of Two* on the next disc.

Man to man

You'll be able to manoeuvre your two men during shootouts so that, for instance, they'll protect each other's backs like you can see here, and so you'll be able to fire in multiple directions.

Army Of Two

Two's company for the PS3 crowd

David Cook

There hasn't been that much news on *Army Of Two* of late. Recently, this co-op based shooter has kind of slipped from the mind in favour of immediately-available thrills like *Resistance* and *MotorStorm*. But while everyone has been looking the other way, EA have been beavering away on *Army Of Two* like... well, beavers.

And it's all looking very nice indeed. We've recently seen a bit more of it, and the importance of the co-operative nature of the game – and that of the AI of your partner – is going to be this game's make or break. You can play co-op with a friend (online if you like) but the single-player game uses powerful AI to give the exact same experience. If they can pull off a believable in-game buddy – obeying you sometimes then calling the shots the next – it'll be a true videogames first.

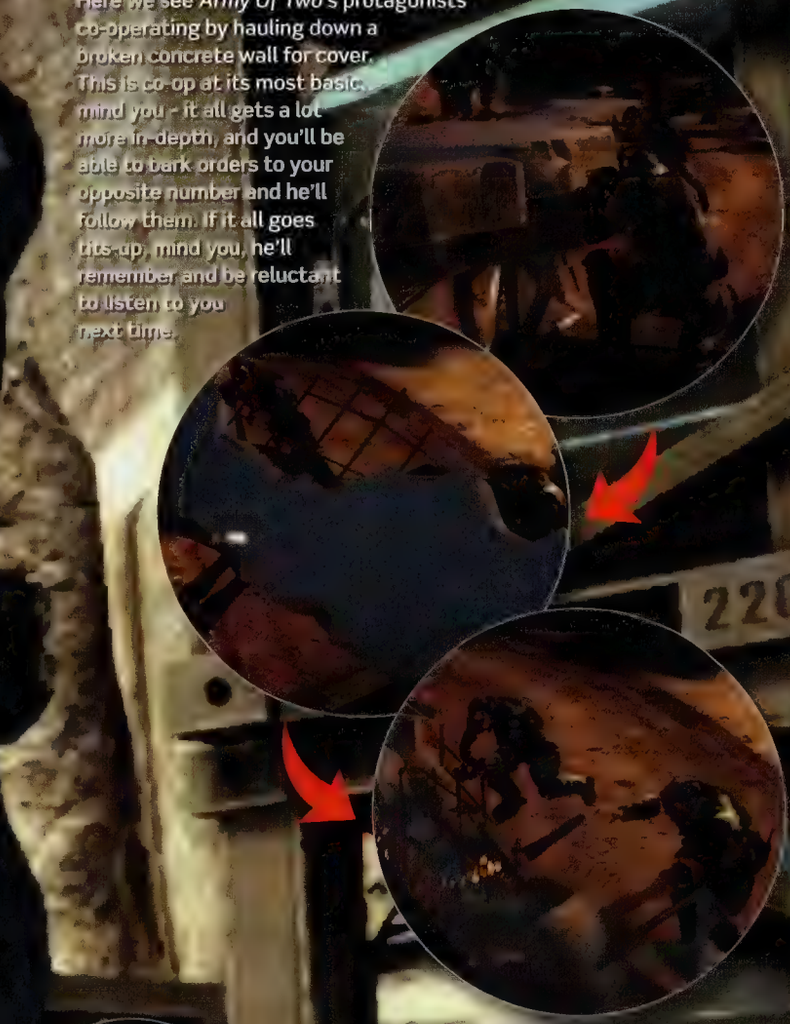
Shot stuff Rios may be down, but he's still able to spit bullets at the baddies. Not literally.

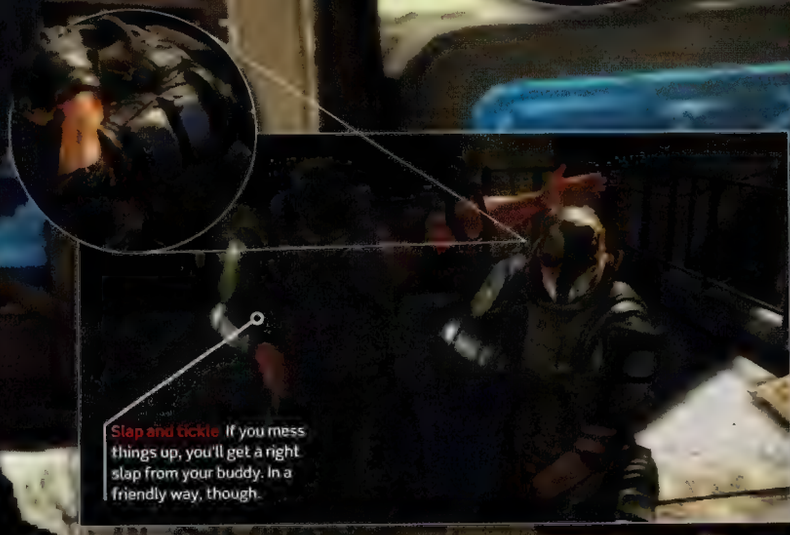
Just the two of us

To the left you can see the bond between your men, Rios and Salem. OK, they're always telling each other to "shut the hell up" and asking "What the [flock] are you doing?", but when Rios gets shot, Salem's on the spot to drag his bud to safety. See how *beautiful* a friendship between two men can be? It's just... [sniff], sorry, we've something in our eye...

Your local co-op

Here we see *Army Of Two*'s protagonists co-operating by hauling down a broken concrete wall for cover. This is co-op at its most basic, mind you - it all gets a lot more in-depth, and you'll be able to bark orders to your opposite number and he'll follow them. If it all goes tits-up, mind you, he'll remember and be reluctant to listen to you next time.





Slap and tickle If you mess things up, you'll get a right slap from your buddy. In a friendly way, though.

PSM3 Reckons

Potentially one of PS3's stand-out titles. If EA can get the artificial intelligence on the money, *Army Of Two* will set a new benchmark.

ETA MAR 2007

PS3

Pub Sony | **Dev** Rhino Studios
Players 1 | **Genre** Adventure
FYI By Daisaku Ikejiri, the man behind *Everybody's Golf*

ON THE DISC

Afrika

Take a walk on the wild side of PlayStation 3

Nathan Irvine

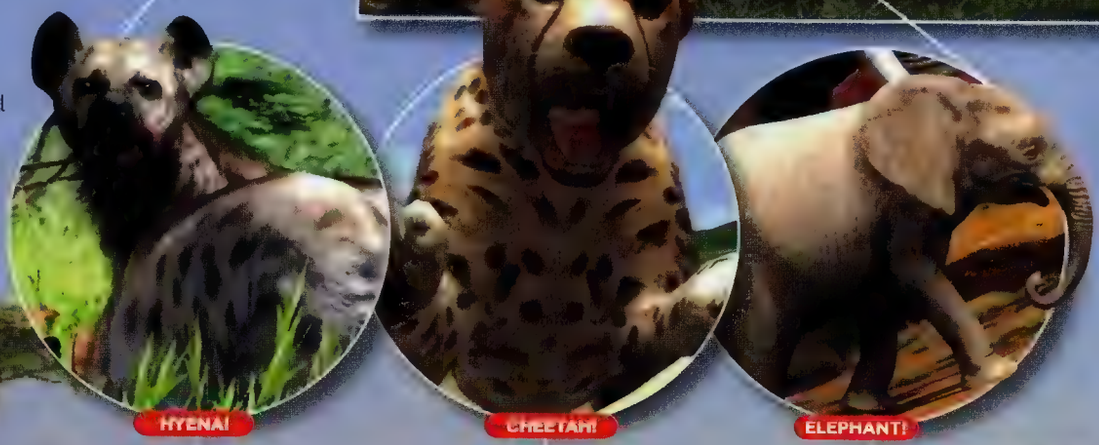
The most visually impressive title on PS3? *Metal Gear 4*? *MotorStorm*? Nope – it's *Afrika*, the photograph-'em-up set in the sprawling Serengeti. But *Afrika* (working title) is very mysterious. Hard details are in short supply. However, what we can gather from the most recent trailer is that you play as a David Attenborough type, banging about Africa filming lions and the like eating, drinking and having it off with each other, all the while avoiding being a) mauled or b) charged at. Thankfully, as the end of the trailer suggests, you'll have a jeep at your disposal so that you can catch up/escape the beautifully-realistic wildlife.

The concept sounds ace – just imagine stealthily sneaking into a pride of lions to get that award-winning shot. Whether it'll let you wrestle the beasts like the late, great Steve Irwin we'll have to wait and see, but for now the prospect of 'shooting' hippos sounds like a welcome relief from shooting another load of generic gang members.

Look who's stalking From the safety of your motor, you can slowly follow the animals from a distance.

Jeep thrills

An off-road jeep will be your transport throughout *Afrika*. We're expecting this all-terrain vehicle to be fairly nippy because you'll have to film a gang of lightning-quick cheetahs at some point. But given how vast the landscapes look set to be, we reckon you'll be able to bomb about the place until your heart's content, jumping over rocks and nailing it through rivers and the like. Should be fun.



INFLUENCES

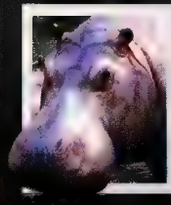
Check out the inspirations behind Afrika

Planet Earth (TV show) | Photography | Rhinos | Beyond Good And Evil | David Attenborough

Gnu and who's army? We're looking forward to snapping this herd of wildebeest.

Charge of the spiked brigade

In the teaser trailer, there's a shot of a rhino angrily charging toward the camera. This suggests that a) the animals will interact with you while you play through *Afrika* and b) they will be unpredictable and possibly try to do you a mischief if you're not careful. So watch it.



PSM3 Reckons

It looks absolutely amazing and if the game is half as good as its next-gen animals, this wildlife-'em-up should be great. More soon.

Your words, your pictures, your videos...

Your Space

Start

32 Letters
Choice cuts from the PSM3 mail sack.

34 Robo-Mind
The robot is back and he's angrier than ever.

35 MySpace
Our eight favourite readers this month.

36 Reader Critic
Disagree with our scores? You try it!

37 YouTube
The best videogamer videos around.

38 Challenge
Monthly challenges for hardcore gamers.

39 I Can Do This!
Your top gaming feats exposed.

39 Beat The Team
Can you beat Dan D and Nathan online?

Letters To PSM3

Your letters and emails, sifted and printed

More than a feeling

Now that we're approaching the end of PS2's lifespan, I would like to list some of the memories that the 'emotion' engine actually delivered upon. In no particular order...

1) *Gran Turismo 3*'s intro movie. The sound of Feeder and *those* graphics. Amazing.

2) Perfectly executing my first über-trick in *SSX Tricky*. I felt like I was a shit-hot snowboarder with no fear. One of the few games available in DTS surround sound, which sounds incredible coming from a 600W amp.

3) Buying *ZOE* and, upon finishing it, loading up a certain demo disc and picking my jaw up off the floor, realising how cinematic games had become. I played the demo so much... the release of *MGS2* couldn't come soon enough.

4) Marvelling at the breakneck speed of *Burnout: Revenge*. Say what you like about EA, this was incredible.

5) Reaching the Precursor basin outside Haven City in *Jak 2*, and standing just at the teleporter ring when the sun breaks out from behind the Baron's tower.

6) Loading up *Onimusha 3* and seeing my favourite hero Mitsuhide Samanosuke Akechi return in the BEST CG INTRO EVER!

7) Arriving in Athens in *God Of War* and seeing the last boss crushing the city beneath his feet. After almost breaking my fingers fighting the Hydra, how was I *ever* going to beat this guy?

8) Tearing around Vice City to the sounds of Kate Bush and 99 Red Balloons with a prossie on one arm and a high-powered rifle in the other.

9) *RESIDENT EVIL 4*.

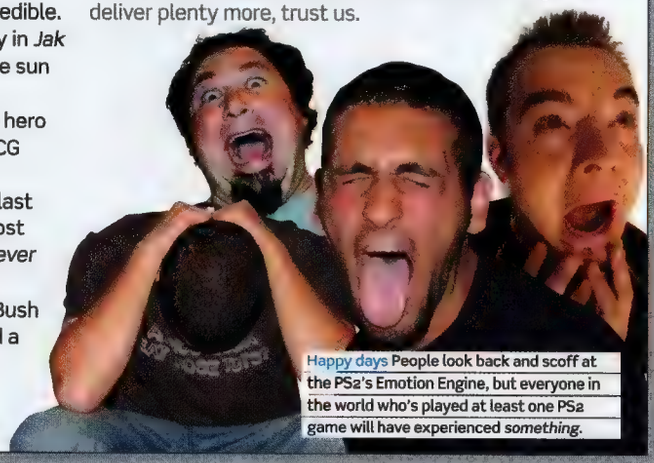
There are others of course. The "I'm not your Mary!" scene from *Silent Hill 2*, the buzzing metropolis in *Ratchet And Clank* and swinging around Manhattan island as Spider-Man. The emotion chip lived up to its lofty promises and I can only hope that PS3 does the same.

Mark Mitchell, Athlone

LETTER

Well said, Mark. We've genuinely had some of the best times of our lives playing PS2 and with everyone whining and tutting at Sony for delaying PlayStation 3, they'd do well to remember that they gave us PS2 and all the unforgettable experiences that came with it. PS3 will deliver plenty more, trust us.

> "A prossie on one arm, a rifle in the other"



Happy days People look back and scoff at the PS2's Emotion Engine, but everyone in the world who's played at least one PS2 game will have experienced *something*.

Portable love

I have just discovered *Gitaroo Man! Lives* and it is the best game I own for my PSP, it was definitely worth trading in *GTA: Liberty City Stories* for it. And I mean that. It relit my love for my PSP, as I had begun thinking it was growing dull and the time I was spending on it grew less and less. But this game has had my PSP in constant use and has really made me see the potential of the format. Despite it being a PS2 to PSP port, it is bloody excellent. So it has reignited my love for PSP and I'm looking forward to things to come. *Chilli Con Carnage*, for instance – I mean *Total Overdose* was amazing and this

My hero Don't get excited - this is, unbelievably, just a mock-up.

PSM3 Wants You!

Post PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Star letter wins the writer a game

Email PSM3@futurenet.co.uk

Text 87103 and start your message PSM3

MySpace & the PSM3 blog Go to myspace.com/psm3 or check out psm3mag.com

Online Play the team at online games and win big

"You What?"

Thanks for writing. No, Really.

I love Russia 'cos of vodka. I love vodka
PsychoPurple, Myspace
Yeah... just don't go loving it *too* much or you might do yourself a mischief.

It's annoying having to get food in real life
Matt, MySpace
Yeah, because it always inevitably leads to a trip to the toilet.

I'm 12. My mum won't let me have 18 certificate games.
Bodge, email
That's because you're 12, not 18.

Another brick in the ball
Wat game is better of and my mates ave been arguing about it *pro Evolution* or *fifa* **Lee**
Dear God. Do you people actually *read* the magazine? You know how we devote page after page to *Pro Evo*? And how we bang on and on and forever on about how wonderful it is? The clue's there.

Laugh after death
on *gta san andreas* could you tell me what the funniest thing to do is **Anon**
Personally, we like stripping CJ down to his undies, feeding him pizza until he's a bloated man-whale and trundling around on a bicycle.

Tipping the velvet
where the hell in *mgs 3 subsistence*, is the jack savage game and the tsuchinoko? **Anon**
Look, son – this isn't a tips service. Do you think we're going to use up precious page real estate answering your tedious questions? And the same applies to the rest of you – stop asking us for help via text. Text us your comments, not cheat requests.

Songs of praise
you guys dont give enough props to rap music in your tunes section its all gay emo bands nobody has even heard of wtf is up with dat **Anon**
OK, good point. We'll try and mix it up a bit. Dave and Andy like indie rock while the other guys like rap. Watch this space.

Text us Send to 87103 and start your message with 'PSM3'.

Fame at last Do you see any of our competitors' logos in PES? No, you don't. Why? Because Konami know the score.
PSM3
11
RBK Pro Ball

looks brilliant. And *MGS: Portable Ops*, *Killzone* and *Ratchet And Clank: Size Matters* all look amazing. This got me thinking: what could possibly come next on PSP? A War Of The Monsters PSP spin-off, or even a *Guitar Hero* game with its own mini guitar? Actually on second thoughts, scratch that one. It's probably a bit impractical.
Mike Cathro, Bottesford

Wh... what?! Someone out there's still enjoying their PSP? And there was us thinking it was on its way to the gallows, what with the dismal lack of original games being released for the poor blighter. But we're glad you bought *Gitaroo Man* because, clearly, it's saved your PSP from eBay or the bottom of a dusty drawer. Also, that tiny guitar idea is genius, but playing it in public could be embarrassing.

The other side

I know you are obviously PlayStation fanatics but do you like anything Nintendo have made? I know that the DS didn't go down well but the GameCube and the Game Boy Advance were good and *Zelda*, *Mr Driller* and *Tetris* were excellent. Oh, and will I be able to play my PSone games on the PS3? I'd hate to lose some of my favourite games for new ones which might not be as good.
Joe Hennell, email

We're not afraid to admit that we play (and love) Nintendo games. Dave and Andy regularly play *Animal Crossing* for one. But we can't talk about it anymore because we're all about PlayStation! Woo! Sony! Yeeeah! Anyway, yes, you'll be able to play your PSone games on PS3, but you might find problems with some – check out www.us.playstation.com/Support/CompatibleStatus for more. Typically, Sony promises they'll fix everything via online updates. Let's hope they don't make a habit out of it, eh?

Feeling blue

How on earth did you wangle your way into *PES6*? Your mag is all over the hoardings. What special favours did you have to do for Konami for that? Well at least you're definitely the world's best mag now! Another point, when I play on my PS2, I've always wondered why most of them are like normal DVDs. but some of them are blue compact discs that make my ps2 a lot louder.
Michael Purvis, email

Our logo is in *PES* because, like you said, we're the world's best magazine. Even *better* than Your Cat. And also because we sponsor the *PES* league. But mainly because we're excellent. And blue discs make more noise because they're CDs which are smaller and get more 'spinnage'.

Telly worries

I read your latest issues of the magazine and I dont know what to do after I bought a new HDTV for the PS3. Of course I dont have one yet, but I bought a Sony bravia in advance. The problem is I bought it before I knew that PS3 will support 1080p. My TV only supports 1080i and 720p. The price was expensive –$ 2000$ – so I want to know if PS3 will look really good on my current TV or if I should i sell it and buy one that supports 1080p. Please tell me what to do.
Ben Taylforth, email

We say, keep the telly you have. It's a good one, and unless you're very picky, you won't notice *much* difference if you shell out for a 1080p model. Really.

Cause and effect

Your mag is awsome, dudes. The guy with the

Best of the Blog

Visit PSM3MAG.COM and have your say

"Don't you love pretty Japanese ladies?"
Posted by: Mazman

"I fondled a PS3 the other week down Shinjuku and it felt mighty warm around the back. Fnarrr."
Posted by: Milf's Bruv

"Good job, Joel!"
Posted by: Everyone (*thanks – Joel*)

'Best' of the Rest

Elsewhere, Chris W talks *Resistance*, "It's just a good looking launch title. Traditionally everything that 'launches' with a Sony console is rubbish. Except *Lumines*." Meanwhile, Chris talks about the stuff that *really* matters: "Can HDCP be disabled? Or is it always disabled while playing games? So playing on PC displays with a DVI-port and without HDCP would be possible." What in Jupiter is he on about?

Blog We post every day. Go to psm3mag.com for free PSM3.

I only went to uni for the "lifestyle". Y'know, cheap booze and instant noodles.
Alabama, MySpace

We went for an education. *Cuh.*
Ever just get sick of everything?
Pete, email

Every second of every awful day.
Jesus is tired. Leave him be.
The Lobotomist,

MySpace
How do you know? Do you have his phone number?
I'm back once again

to cause some controversy!!!!!!!!
The Dark Enigma, Myspace
Please don't. (!!!!!!)

CHEESE. CHEESE. CHEEEEEEZE/, DDD
-keyran-, MySpace
Mentalist.
You smell like a poop.

Slim, MySpace
That's not very nice, is it? Sheesh...
///S/S/SDASDA
ODX, email

Well said.
From here it can only go down.
MetalKitten, MySpace
Sounds rude. Snigger.

Poll Position

We ask. You Answer

This Month What's the best fighter on PS2?

Next Month Best party game: *Buzz*, *SingStar* or *Guitar Hero*?

MySpace Cast your vote at http://www.myspace.com/psm3

afro, Nathan methinks, he is well cool. Looking at his hair is the highlight of my day. On *MGS Subsistence*, in Online mode, how do you type the stuff in at the bottom? I might buy it. Also, which game do you think I should buy for launch day? *MotorStorm*, *Tony Hawk's Project 8* or *Warhawk*?

I would love to work on a PS3 mag like you, it must be great travelling everywhere and playing games all day. At least then I'd have an excuse to not get off the PlayStation. Also, I already have 100% on *Just Cause* – that game is really crap: blow this up, kill that... it's all the same and extremely boring. The best bit is the the music at the start.

Joshua Titley, email

Woah there, Nelly. That's a lot of questions you're asking. But we're going to answer them all, because we have nothing better to do. To type messages in *Subsistence* you need to plug a USB keyboard into your PS2. What launch games should you get? Read our reviews. And we don't "play games all day" – we play games a lot of the time, but spend most of our hours typing. Like we're doing right now. As for *Just Cause* – you say you didn't like it, yet you sunk hours into it and got 100%? Hmm...

Last legs

It's great, isn't it? When you've spent your time and money on your PS2 and then – BANG! – it punches you in the face. I spent hours on the (admittedly lovely) *Psychonauts*, ranking up to 30, when I decided to turn it off for the night. I glanced up at the screen and saw the autosave thing on it a millisecond before I pressed the button. Yay – something about corrupted frikking data. Then I pick up *Half-Life* at the shops. I play it, it works fine, then when I load it the next day? "DISC READ ERROR!" on the bloody screen. Freaking great. Oh yeah, and my dozy eejit of a mum chucked nearly all of my poor wee PSM3 mags out. How I cried. And now my parents say that even if I spent the whole year, saving for a PS3, they won't allow it in the house because it's "addictive" and "rots my mind". Yes. Quite. Though I'll get one anyway. It's been a sad couple of months for my PlayStation 2 :(

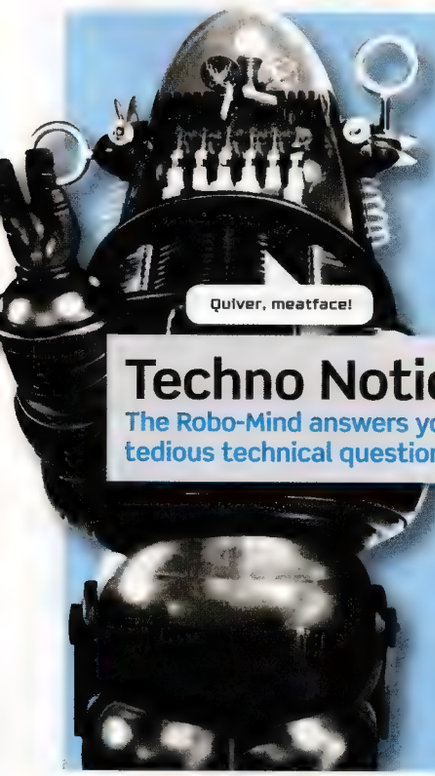
Rebekah Curran, email

Sounds like your PS2 is getting old. This is actually quite common because, sadly, the disc drive inside the PS2 is pretty low-grade and constant use can wear it down. But look at it this way— now you have an excuse to buy a lovely slimline one. They're much nicer. Tell your parents we said you should be allowed a PS3. Tell them we said it improves your brain power. That'll do it.

Generations apart

Do you ever get the feeling that

Worn out Is your PS2 on its last legs? If you have an original model, it might well be. Time for a replacement...



Techno Notice

The Robo-Mind answers your tedious technical questions

Dear Robo-Mind

Will PS3 make my PS2 games look better? I remember PS2 had a 'texture smoothing' option for old games. That was cool.

Misty, email

"Shrrrkkk! If you disgusting meaties weren't so riddled with flaws and insecurities you wouldn't be constantly seeking improvements – you'd be happy with what you've got, like me. I'm electro-superior. A polished adonis. PERFECTION. Anyway, in response to your pitiful question, no, there won't be any improvements. PS2 games look identical on PlayStation 3. Fzzzt!"

Dear Robo-Mind

I was messing around with my brother's Xbox 360 and I noticed you can download game demos for free. That's brilliant! Will we be able to download them on PlayStation?!

Tommy Sandringam, email

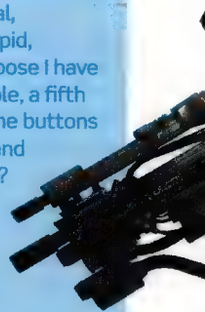
"Yes. YES. YES. <clang> Brrkk... YESSSZZZZZsssszzzz... GAH! Blasted speech motor. It keeps malfunctioning. One of those PSM3 swines spilt Lucozade down my back. What I meant to say was: "Yes". They're totally free and you can download them from the PS3 online shop. If only you could download a new brain, eh, fleshy? I can. Haw!"

Dear Robo-Mind

I was wondering, if you can have seven players on PS3, why are there only four red lights on the controller? Shouldn't there be seven?

Derek Statler, email

"Brrrr.... brrrk! What?! Could you have asked a more banal, pointless question? You tepid, spongy meatbag. But I suppose I have to answer it. Say, for example, a fifth player joins. The four and one buttons will light up. Because four and one makes five. Do you see? It's simple, really. Even for your tiny, organic mind."



Dear Robo-Mind

You sound a bit poorly, Robo-Mind. You keep fizzing and bleeping. Are you OK? I'm worried about you.

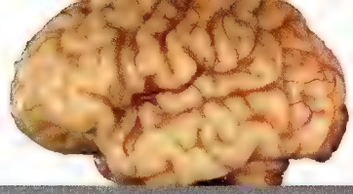
Darren Milsom, email

"What business is it of yours, you despicable urchin. Besides the Lucozade accident, I'm fine. I've never felt stronger. <crackle> ffzzzttt... POWER CORRUPTION!... SHUT DOWN IN FIVE... FOUR... <fzzz> Oh bollocks...

@ Email us Got a question? Email it to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject 'Robo'.

"My parents think PS3 will rot my mind"

Rebekah Curran email



PS3 games are just the same as PS2 games, but with better graphics? I dont really see any advancements, and it's supposed to be the next generation, isn't it? *Resistance* just seems to be a generic shooter. OK, so it's going to be great but it doesnt have anything distrinctive about it, gameplay wise – like the gravity gun in *Half-Life 2*, for example. And the same goes for *Ridge Racer 7*. It's just another *Ridge Racer* game with nicer visuals!
Javi Hunter, email

We see what you mean, but there are notable differences between PS2 and PS3 games (except *Genji*). Blu-ray, for example, means games can be much, much bigger – then there's the processor, allowing for mind-bending physics, and the new online stuff. OK, so a lot of the launch titles are re-treads of familiar genres, but as developers get used to and more confident with the hardware, the games will become more original and outlandish. So keep the faith. PlayStation 3 rocks hard. And this is only the beginning.

Old hat Sure, *Resistance* is a fairly generic shooter, but it's still brilliant and the hi-def visuals really add to the atmosphere. Does PS3 need more original games?

UK myspace – a place for friends

Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and join us

PSM3's Top Eight

MySpace readers who rock our world

Deceased

ABOUT HER

"Craves attention, messy, open, rash, irritable, likes large parties, no self control, weird, fragile."

MUSIC AND FILMS

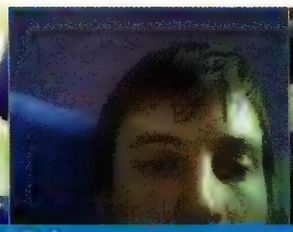
Films: "Mulholland Drive, Blue Velvet, Lost Highway, The Naked Gun, Kung Fu Hustle." Music: "Franz Ferdinand, Cansei De Ser Sexy, New Young Pony Club, Kasabian, Tool, The Ark, The Smiths, Johnny Cash, Zeromancer, Tool."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Just Cause... but it's a bit crap.

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

We *love* Brazilian indie pop (like Cansei De Ser Sexy) and we're fragile too. In fact, we're off to the toilets now for a cry. <sniff>



Rob

ABOUT HIM

"I used to be fat. Fat and a geek. I say weird things from time to time but I'M NOT RANDOM! Hah!"

INTERESTS

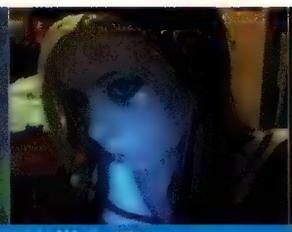
"Film, mainly. Indie, American, world cinema... I'm not picky, as long as it's good and not too urban. I like going to gigs but unfortunately nobody will ever go with me. So much for being an individual. Who wants to be my gig buddy?"

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Pro Evo 6, Freedom Fighters

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He's an aspiring filmmaker. We like aspiration. And who *will* be his gig buddy? Anyone?



Hollie's Toys...

ABOUT HER

"My weaknesses are rejection, embarrassment and hurtful words. *[Us too – PSM3]* My fears are spiders, being hurt and dying. *[Us too – PSM3]* My best physical feature is my hair." *[Us too... actually, maybe not - PSM3]*

TELEVISION

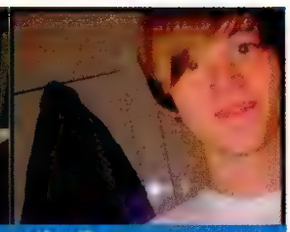
"Scrubs, Will and Grace, Roswell, Shameless, Bad Girls, Hustle, Hell's Kitchen, Cardcaptors, Fumoffu, Full Metal Panic, Ah! My Goddess, Ikki Tousen, That '70s Show, Friends, Family Guy, Buffy."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

The original *Metal Gear Solid*

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

Any girl that 'does' cosplay and likes games is alright with us.



Nicol

ABOUT HIM

"I'm 16, I live in Brigg, I play guitar in a band called The Cure For Necrosis and I love gardening."

LIKES/DISLIKES

He likes: "Chicken flavour Super Noodles, milk with chocolate biscuits, my girlfriend Georgina." Dislikes: "Bullying, segregation and people who categorise me."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Pro Evolution Soccer 6

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

We hate being categorised too. Ignorant people call us mental 'cause we like to wear flippers and bark like dogs – but that's *us*, man.

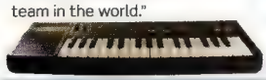
Hannibal Smith

ABOUT HIM

"I'm the world's greatest lover."

INTERESTS

"Football, reading, music, creating sonic landscapes, films, wrasslin, games, UFC, Bill Hicks, debauchery and supporting Liverpool FC, the best football team in the world."



CURRENTLY PLAYING

Pro Evo 6, Smackdown 2007

WHY HE'S TOP 8

We create sonic landscapes. In the morning, after a night of heavy drinking and curry. Andy is the world's greatest lover, though.

Peetry

ABOUT HIM

"I am a student of design and programming – program design, if you will. I currently live in Glasgow, Scotland and spend the majority of my time sat in front of a screen! I'm a 'giving up' kind of person."

WOULD LIKE TO MEET

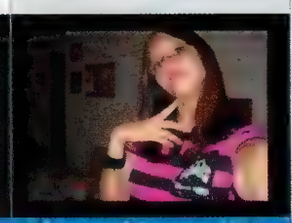
"Ken Kutaragi and Phil Harrison so I could verbally abuse them about the PS3 delay. And hurt them."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Final Fantasy X, Mr Moskeeto

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He has a countdown timer on his page that lets passing 'spacers know exactly when the next issue of PSM3 is out. Excellent!



Diamond Serpant™

ABOUT HER

"I like to smile. I smile nearly all of the time. Even if I don't feel like it. I'm not usually a false person. I hate when people are upset and I'll do anything to help them."

LOVES/HATES

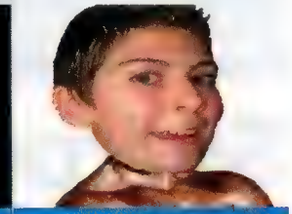
Loves: "Primark, my computer, my friends, music." Hates: "My grandma, babies crying, being lonely, drugs, pain, salt."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Spyro: A New Beginning

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

We *loathe* salt. And we'd do anything to help upset people too. Unless they're made of salt, in which case they can *sod off*.



STEROIDS

ABOUT HIM

"My name is Andrew. My nickname is Steroids because of my muscles. I play the drums and like having – and knowing about all – the latest technology."

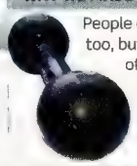
MOVIES

"The Shining, House of Wax, The Amityville Horror, Scary Movie."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Splinter Cell: Double Agent

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8



People call us 'steroids' too, but it's not because of our muscles, we'll say that much. We like his taste in schlock horror

MySpace Want to make our Top Eight? Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and send us a friend request. We'll welcome you on board sharpish!

You What?

Do you guys have a MySpace just to be trendy? Go on admit it
Jason, email
No. We have one because it's a good way of communicating with our readers. And because, secretly, we're big scenester idiots. (Not really)

OMFG! I was watching you guys playing *EyeToy Sports* on the DVD. You look ridiculous. Do you have no shame? LMFAO!!!!!
Paddy, email
Yeah, you try flailing your arms about at imaginary footballs and keeping your dignity intact at the same time.

What's the PSM3 team's favourite drinks in the pub?
PoPPA, email
We like a flirtini, or a delicious pint of moon juice. Mmmm.

There are too many photos of you in the mag. I don't really want to see you faces, tbh
Dover, email
Whaaat? But we're *beautiful*. We could look at ourselves all day. And do. You should be grateful, really.

Reader Critic

Disagree with our reviews? Then show us how it's done

Know your role *Suikoden* used to be as popular as *FF* with some people, but this sequel ended all that.

Suikoden V

Matt Barker has no time for lazy RPGs with effeminate lead characters

Reader Profile

Name Matt Barker
Location Leicester
Fave games *Monkey Island, GTA* series, *Deus Ex, Shadow Of Rome, Final Fantasy* series
About me I spend my time writing music and photoshopping people for laughs. I also have an utterly useless GNVQ, and have played too many *Dynasty Warriors* games.

Here it is, the game where you get to play as the most feminine looking male character (complete with long pink hair and big cute eyes) that I've ever seen in my life.

Anyone who has played a previous *Suikoden* game (Bar *Suikoden Tactics*) knows what to expect here – way too many random battles, 108 characters to find and befriend, a mute lead character and many hours of RPGing. That's if you can stomach it's rather plain gameplay. This time around you can have up to six people in your party – just like in the earlier games. If you can get used to the horrible fixed camera angle that leaves you squinting at everything and live with the fact that odds are that, if you want to unlock all 108 people to get the best ending you *will* need a guide, and this game could potentially last you for a very long time indeed. You see, some of the methods required to unlock characters require you to have amazing sheer luck, or the ability to read the developers' minds.

For instance, would you know that you have to journey to a mountainside with a particular character with you at a certain point in the game and make sure said character is at least one level behind your lead character? No? Why not? It's *obvious*, surely? At least the developers must think it is. Another gripe is that random battles occur far too often, causing frustration when you're travelling along an area where the monsters are so weak you barely scrape any experience points out of them, making it a total waste of time. One of the weaker RPGs released this year. **Matt Barker**

Reader Verdict

An average RPG that makes some rather foolish mistakes.

69

@ Email us Subject 'Critic' to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Or post a review to the usual address.

Star Ocean 3

Another obscure, cruelly-ignored RPG

If any of you haven't heard of *Star Ocean*, you should be ashamed. For starters — the story. It has so many twists and turns it's like a melted Curly Wurly. The battle system is completely unique – and much more interactive than the turn-based crap that made *FFX* such a dissapointment. Battle Trophies are available if you meet requirements in normal battles – it'll take multiple playthroughs to collect them all, though. And the soundtrack is absolutely magnificent – a mix of sci-fi and classic tracks that makes the experience breathtaking. On top of that, the graphics are gorgeous, with no pop-up or glitches. It truly is a gaming masterpiece. If you happen to find this in a bargain bin, give it a go. You'll never turn back. A masterpiece. **Paul Matthias**

97

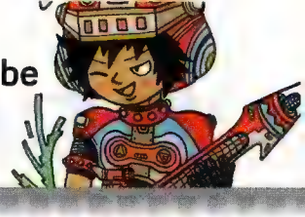
Scarface

Pete loves a bit of sweary violence

This is one of the best games I have ever played. There is just so much to f***ckin do! Oh, sorry – you see, *Scarface* is quite a sweary game and Tony Montana is really insulting to everyone he meets, even his friends. The game is a bit like *Grand Theft Auto* and so on, but the goal is to build a drug empire. This means you have to take over different areas of Miami and buy businesses and warehouses to store and sell your cocaine. And then, when you start to get more popular as a drug dealer, you get richer and can spend your cash on fine things for your mansion and flash new cars. You can even buy yachts to sail around in. The best bit is later in the game when Tony goes to the islands off the coast of Miami. It's a big surprise and there are no cops to bother you, so you can cause trouble without any hassle. Great stuff, all in all. **Pete Morrison**

91

"*Gitaroo Man Lives!* has to be the best game on PSP."
Mike Bottesford



G-Unit Edition

50 Cent on PSP gets blasted

50 Cent survived nine shots you know? Of course you know, who doesn't – it's his bloody claim to fame for God's sake! Anyway, G-Unit Edition for PSP sees a top-down approach for our invulnerable rapper. With countless weapons at Fiddy's disposal, you wander around and shoot as many thugs as you can in a quest for revenge on the person that shot our 'hero' nine times in the first place. The guy that made Fiddy famous! Hell, that's a good reason to buy this game – kill the man who brought 50 Cent into the limelight! He deserves everything he gets! Still, unless you suffer from Obsessive Cent Disorder and enjoy the repetitiveness of running and gunning your way through the ghetto (and Fiddly's special brand mumbling, stumbling hip-hop shambles) avoid this game like a Chamillionaire B-Side.

56

Dexter Pearson

PSM3 You were so right!

Reader love

"I think it's a great game. It takes ages to unlock the cars, but it's still top."
Uncle Jonny, MySpace

NFS: Carbon

We said "A few misfires can't stop *NFS: Carbon* from passing its last PS2 MOT. Good stuff."
PSM82 | Justin Towell | 83%

"It's just a copy of the last game with a bit more gloss. It sucks, man!"
PsychoPurple, MySpace

PSM3 You were so wrong!

Reader rant

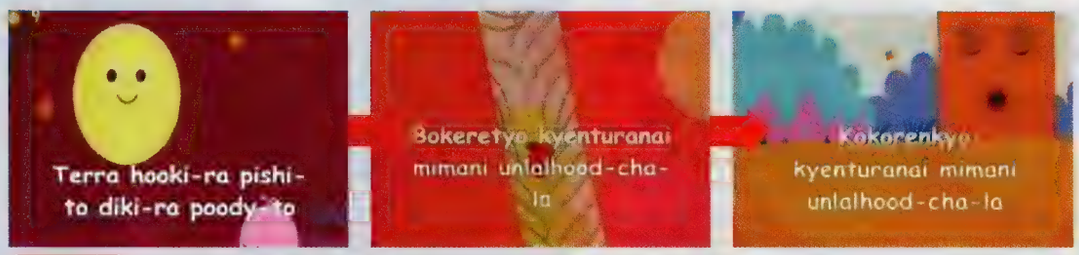
YouTube The Video Zone

Out there gamer vids from the cyberdepths

God Hand advert by Chan316

STRANGE Compare this conceptual madness to British game adverts – ten seconds of pre-rendered footage and a game logo – and you realise just how much the Japanese love games. http://snipurl.com/123we

LocoRoco theme song karaoke by Ossianbg



BRILLIANT Fact blast: the language in *LocoRoco* is a fictional mish-mash of Japanese and gibberish. The game's designer Tsutomu Kouno wanted the music to sound the same worldwide. http://snipurl.com/121p3

Akihabara PS3 queue by Saweki

RANDOM The quality is terrible, but this random passer-by has inadvertently filmed our Joel sitting at the front of the queue at the Asobit City store in Akihabara with his video phone. Hi Joel! http://snipurl.com/123wy

Silent Hill 2 'dog' ending by Vaspian

INGENIOUS Every *Silent Hill* game has a bonus comedy ending. This is our favourite, revealing that the evil force responsible for James' pain and torment was in fact... a dog with a computer. http://snipurl.com/123y1

@ Email us Created your own brilliant fan vid? Or just found a gem you want to share? Email psm3@futurenet.co.uk and tell us all about it.

ON THE DISC
Learn how to play PES6 like an expert

Reader Challenge

Pit your skills versus our fiendish test

DO THIS!

NFS: Carbon: Do the canyon duel fast as you can

Select 'challenge series' from the main menu then go for the first canyon duel. The game chooses a car for you, so don't worry about that – we want to see how quickly you can beat your opponent. Theoretically you could do it less than a minute into the race because of the way the canyon duels work, so impress us with a lightning quick victory. If you manage to overtake the other car and stay there for a few seconds, you win automatically – so record yourself doing that for extra kudos.

Game ***Need For Speed: Carbon***
Challenge **Your fastest time on the first canyon duel challenge.**
Deadline **January 22 – so get cracking!**

WIN THIS!

Courtesy of our friends at The Next Level at Game.co.uk, the top 10 PS2 games can be yours!

Game.co.uk are the nation's favourite online games store. Established in 1996 they've sold over 40 million games to gamers throughout the world and are masters of fast, safe delivery and bargain rock-bottom prices. When it comes to securing day one new releases The Next Level at Game is the only place we trust. Why not give them a try? You know it makes sense.

www.game.co.uk

HOW TO TAPE

1 Start Here
Plug your PS2 into the back of your video/DVD recorder. Choose the AV input channel on your video and you should see your PS2 on your TV.

2 Do your best
Now just record away. Any tape or DVD on any format welcome.

3 Send it in
Write us a note explaining what's on your tape or disc. Don't forget your name and address. And include a pic of yourself – or email psm3@futurenet.co.uk, subject line 'PIC OF ME'.

LAST MONTH'S WINNER!

Well done to **Derek Parker**, who earned over 50,000 'balls' in Tony's mansion escape. You are the ball master.

Post Put your tape in an envelope, mark it 'NFS Challenge' and send to the usual address. That's PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW y'know. Entries in by January 22

"*Just Cause* is really crap – I have 100% on it"

Joshua Titley email

Beat The Team

Think you're good enough at PES6? Take on PSM3 and find out...

"Toodle pip, great unwashed, we bear salubrious tidings – the lag on *PES6* has been improved. OK, so it's still terrible at times – but it's an improvement. If you think you've got what it takes to topple Team PSM3, we'll see you online.

1 PSM3 (1) vs Marko (4)
"First up is MarkogGardinic, or the real life *PES5* UK champion as he's better known, obviously desperate to prove himself in front of us legends. We could sense his angst and allowed him to dance through our defence to score after the break. Yep, that's right 'allowed'. We're so charitable."

2 PSM3 (2) vs REZ407 (0)
"With our goodwill well and truly spent after the previous game, it was time to get down to business against Mr REZ407. Obviously in awe of our skills, he never sniffed a victory. Marko came to cheer his idols on too – so to make things exciting for him, we gave away a penalty... and saved it. Ha."

3 PSM3 (6) vs Biggie (2)
"By the third game, we were in need of a punchbag to work on. Biggie stepped up and got knocked for six by a rampant Barca. By the time the fourth had gone in, his players had literally frozen. We suspect he threw down his pad in anger. Biggie by name, small by nature."

Final score PSM3 United: 2 – You Lot: 1

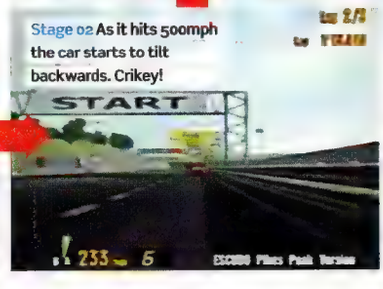
"Two resounding victories and one loss to a former UK champion. We're going to win every game from now on."

Online Want to make Nath and Dan D cry like petulant babies? Then keep an eye on www.psm3mag.com and we'll announce our next online date.

Look! I Can Do This!

Send us your amazing gaming feats and we'll send you some games

Name bfoxx121
Game *Gran Turismo 3*
Achievement Check this out – bfoxx has tweaked his Suzuki Escudo's innards to such a degree that he can reach speeds of up to 900mph. It's so fast that the car goes up on its back two wheels. He thrashes a lap of Pikes Peak in barely any time whatsoever.



PSM3 Verdict

Rather than just record himself doing a fast lap, this lad has taken advantage of the game's motor tweaking system and created the world's fastest car. So well done – very creative.

95

Post Mark your tapes 'I Can Do This' and send it to us at the usual address.

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January 2007
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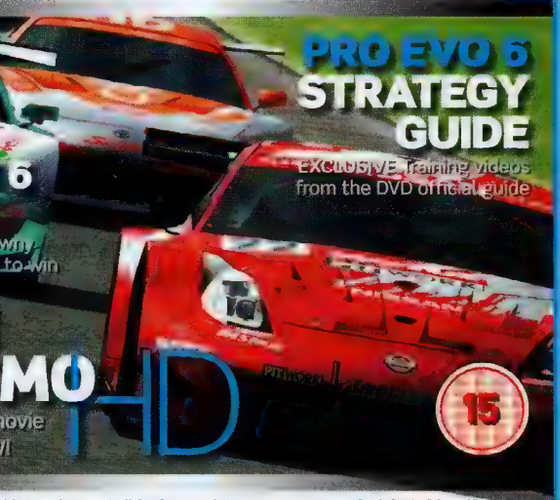

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"THE SECOND PS3 IN THE WORLD"

Sleeping on Tokyo's streets for a launch day PS3. Full incredible story inside.

15

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No sleep til Tokyo Stupidly, we didn't kip on the plane because Mean Girls was on. Big mistake.

The incredible story of how **PSM3** travelled **8000 miles,** spent **£943,** slept on the street for **48 hours** and **flouted the law** to bring you...

THE SECOND PS3 IN THE WORLD

It was one of those ideas that starts in the pub. "Imagine getting a PS3 on launch day," said Milf, stealing too many Mini Cheddars from the communal bag. "It'd be brilliant - you could dash back to Britain and have it ages before anybody else."

"Hmm," replied Dan G. "It would definitely be interesting, what with how seriously everybody takes their queuing in other countries."

"But it'd be teh suxxor," pointed out Andy, who now *talks* in l33t after too much *Battlefield*. "Teh internets says there'll be fights on the streets. And you'd have to queue for days." "You'd have to be mental," agreed Dan D. "So who can we get to do it?" asked Dan G... before reaching for speed dial and pressing 'Joel'. Five days later Joel was checking into the crummiest hotel in Tokyo...

7:00pm November 11: Tokyo - IT BEGINS

Well, almost. It's late evening in Tokyo, and I am in the most

I predict a riot Things get pushy at Yodabashi camera. 500 short yards away, we drink milky tea.

important phase of PSM3's plan to get The First PS3 In The UK. We're going to stand outside a shop – electronics district Akihabara's popular Aso Bits City – for as long as it takes to get one of Sony's über-boxes and then bring it home for one lucky reader. I'm hanging out with PSM3's contact in Tokyo – confusingly known as Dan Griffith, or – as I call him behind his back, Dan G v2.0. For the past three hours I've been sitting in Mister Donut, getting wired on coffee and periodically nipping outside to check if anybody's started queueing outside our designated venue yet – they haven't. Tomorrow morning, things could be entirely different as early adopters get the early morning train to the shops. Dan G suggests I should get to Aso Bit City – the store we've picked – at seven, just to be on the safe side. I agree in principle, but I'm *very* jetlagged.

6:00am OMG, it's already gone wrong. Teh suxxor!

I get a call from Dan G v2.0, who tells me that he decided to get to Akihabara early and that I'd better get down to Aso Bits quick because "they're already queueing". Panicking, I sling my sleeping bag, miniature chair, books, money and laptop into a bag and leg it down to the shops. What if I'm already too late? What if the shop's only getting 20 units and they're already gone? The boys are going to kill me...

6:10am OMG! It *hasn't* gone wrong. Teh roxxor!

Arrive at the shop, where there are exactly *two* people in the queue: Dan G and a Japanese teenager wearing slippers with a gigantic bag of comics next to him. My relief at not being too late is quickly replaced by thoughts about killing Dan for getting me up and in line obviously way too early.

7:30am Food makes everything better

We are still the only people in the queue. Dan G v2.0 buys us both some Gyudon (boiled beef and rice) with Miso soup for breakfast. It's lovely, and I briefly stop fantasizing about murdering him.

8:00am The freezing arms of winter's embrace

It's starting to get chilly. Put on a hat. Dan goes to see if anyone's queueing at the nearby Messe store – Japan's only independent game shop. Early morning pedestrian traffic picks up as commuters head to work, and most of them look at me like they think I'm

Everybody needs good neighbours

How to survive a launch day queue in Tokyo

Make friends with everyone

Yes, your queue-buddies might look a bit weird, want to talk to you about *Gundam* or only be able to communicate with you through the art of mime, but this is going to come in handy. For one thing, they'll watch your place when you go for a coffee or a slash, and for another they might bring you food. And this brings up another important point: for the price of a box of Pocky sticks, you can make everyone in the queue love you. It's like the world's cheapest round.

Bring a chair

Our little pal Taiga, unbelievably, turned up packing a small mat. Fortunately, we'd bought two fishing chairs for about three pounds each, and felt like a benevolent emperor when he thanked us for giving one to him. It might be relatively warm in November in Japan, but nobody wants piles, PS3 launch or not.

Don't get tetchy

There's nothing worse than making a scene in Japan – and losing your cool loses you credibility in a big way. In the face of obvious queue-jumpery, it's enough to point out the faux-pas and watch the lawbreaker scurrry away - don't push it.

Drink beer

Around the 22-hour mark, nothing eases the nerves like a nice slosh of Kirin. Just don't pass out and lose your spot...

Taiga would Our mate, and first man in the queue Taiga. Top tip: Bring plenty of comics.

homeless. Briefly contemplate leaving my Gyudon tray out and seeing if anyone throws me their spare change, but decide not to in case the police take a dim view of gaijin tramps.

8:12am Japanese shops sell *weird* things

Brilliant! Dan returns with a pack of what I'm going to refer to as Magic Happy Hot-Time stickers. Unfortunately, we can't work out how to use them and the packaging - a genie looking all pleased with himself - doesn't help.

8:16am It burns! It burns!

We give a Hot-Time sticker to the first man in the queue who shows us what you're supposed to do: open up the packet, stick the sachet inside to a cold bit of your anatomy – I go stomach, Dan chooses his arm - and wait for it to heat up. After a slow start, it begins to heat up like a kettle, but I daren't rip it off for fear of taking a layer of skin with it.

9:00am Tea? Coffee? Pornography?

Man #1 wanders off, then comes back with a stash of softcore manga grot and coffees for everyone. Our new best friend introduces himself as Taiga, but that's about as far as our Japanese takes us.

10:00am Maybe we could *nick* one...

Action! First, we get kicked out of our comfortable corner by an angry man from the shop next door who wants to set up a display of mobile phones. Then, a van full of boxes turns up, and is immediately surrounded by paranoid-looking men who start unloading it. OMG! The PS3s are actually here!

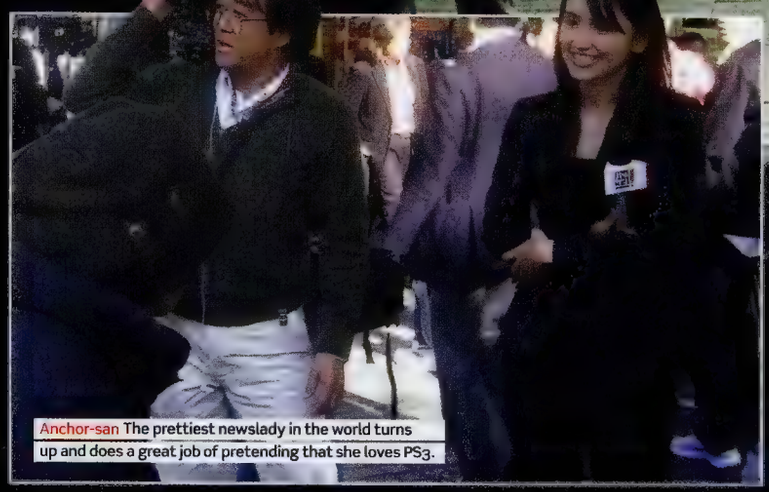
10:30am Where the hell have you been, guys?

Other people finally start to turn up, and form a sort of queue behind us. The pedestrians stop looking at me like I'm a tramp and start looking at me like I'm a super-nerd instead.

Noon Smile for your close-up, Mr Snape

A camera crew arrives but because we arrived early and bagged the best places, they don't notice that we're part of the queue. Taigai looks distressed, because - as he explains - he's been here since 3pm yesterday

"The only PS3-related Japanese words we can remember are 'I like fighting games'"



Anchor-san The prettiest newslady in the world turns up and does a great job of pretending that she loves PS3.

Simply the west Not everyone after PS3 was Japanese, there were some Westerners there too.

afternoon. As the cameramen walk past, Dan yells something unintelligible in Japanese, and they come over for a chat. We hold up Taigai's pre-prepared 'I'm number One!' card and fall in love with the female presenter on the spot. Unfortunately, she isn't very impressed that a) The only PS3-related Japanese words we can remember are 'I like fighting games' and b) We're standing in line for a games console. Ah, well.

1:30pm Only fools – and PSM3 – fall in love

Taigai's mate turns up with – hoorah – a massive bag of food, bought by all the people in his office for us all to share. We stuff ourselves with onigiri (rice-balls wrapped in seaweed, with pickle inside) and drink even more caffeine, despite the dangers of repeated toilet visits. Everyone else in the queue looks jealous and the sun's shining on our spot. I'm having a great time and I've even got over the pretty presenter by falling in love with ten other Japanese girls. Yay! They seem strangely indifferent, though. Boo!

2:00pm Sweet relief

We nip to a nearby coffee shop, buy a tiny latte, then get the electronic password for the bogs and tell it to the next 20 people in the queue. The staff of the coffee shop probably don't appreciate it too much, but the rest of the queue loves us.

3:00pm Joel Snape sleeps with the fishing chair

I nearly fall asleep and discover the massive disadvantage of my fishing chair: either you slump back and it sticks its prongs into your spine, or you slump forward and it folds you into a ball. I'm about to fall asleep anyway when a man from The Times turns up and starts asking me to explain the pre-order system. That wakes me up a bit.

4:00pm To be pointed

Loads of people keep turning up and trying to join the queue at our end – i.e. the front – and I'm forced to learn the Japanese for 'start', 'end' and "What, didn't you understand me the first time?" I also do a lot of pointing, which is apparently rude in Japan.

6:00pm Queue quibbles

The shop staff turn up with signs saying that if everyone doesn't behave, they'll disband the queue.

Trucking hell The PS3s arrive! At this point we considered grabbing one and sprinting.

Queue-speak!

Essential phrases for queues in Japan

Nani gamu wa kaimasu ka? – Which games are you planning to buy, then?
Tsukareta, yo! – I'm really tired.
Naranderun dakedo – We're making a line.
Yai, kisama! Saigo wa asoko desu – Oi, wanker! The end's over there.
Osanai-de yo! – Don't push!
Kaeshite yo! – Give it back!
Bukkoroshite yo! – I'm going to kick your head in!
Oboeteru yo! – You will not get away with this!

PS3 Launch

Late watchers 3am, and we feel strong and invulnerable behind the special red barricade.

Shopping mad At a rough guess, we probably sat through the *Genji* trailer 600 times. Ah, *bliss*.

Nobody budges. Dan tells me that a load of homeless people have turned up in the queue, being paid to wait by sinister types in suits. Everything gets heated as people start queuing up where they like, all the Westerners in the queue start telling them to get to the back and the hardcore otaku are too polite/nervous to say anything. I eat a load of sugary donuts and have another coffee, which, suprisingly, doesn't calm me down.

7:00pm He said *what* about my PS3?

Things slow down a bit, and the only entertainment is a sort of queue-based Chinese whispers – you go and tell something to someone in the queue, then see how long it takes to get back to you. Dan tells someone that he reckons there are "about 90 units" in the shop's allocation, and 20 minutes later a Scottish bloke from the back dashes up demanding to know if it's true. We shrug.

8:00pm Blog off

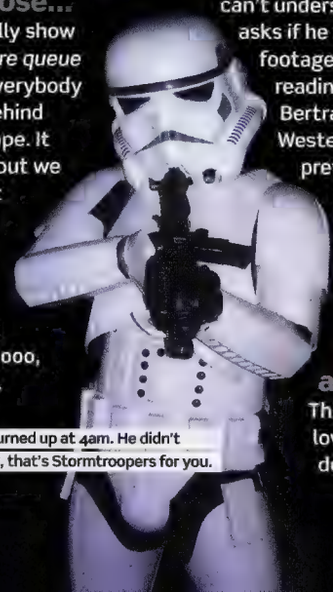
It's socialising time, as dozens of amateur bloggers turn up and ask us exactly the same questions (which model are you buying? What time did you arrive? Where are you from?). Then another journalist (who we know and loathe) turns up and tells us that the shop's 'definitely' doing a lottery to decide who'll get the first PS3, so that our premium queue-position means absolutely piss-all. We get briefly dispirited.

8:12pm Never listen to conjecture and lies

We use our rubbish Japanese to question bemused shop staff about the 'lottery', and they look at us like we're crazy – apparently it's happening in other shops, but not this one. Briefly contemplate tracking the other journalist down and killing him, then decide it's not worth losing our place in the queue over.

9:00pm So close...

The shop staff finally show up... to *flip the entire queue around* and cram everybody into a tiny space behind some special red tape. It could all go wrong but we survive at the front and the shop man announces that they have... wait for it... 230 units for sale. Which, out of a Japan-wide 80,000, seems pretty good.



Super Trooper This man turned up at 4am. He didn't even want a machine. Tsk, that's Stormtroopers for you.

10:00pm So I read poncey books? What of it?

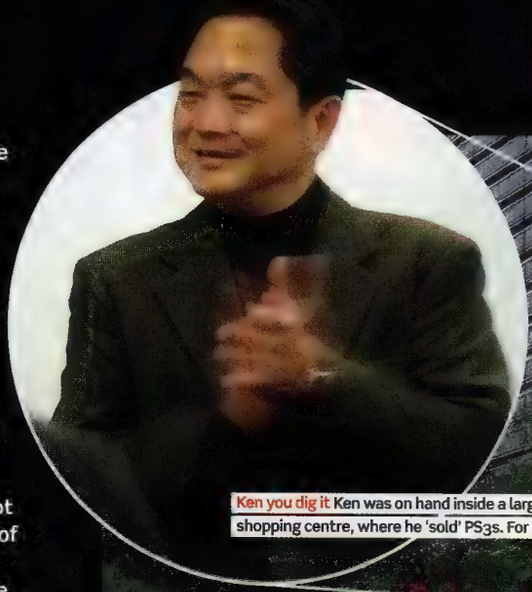
The shop staff reshuffle everyone *again* so that we're sitting in front of the metal shutters as the shop closes down. Dan finally gets sick of explaining to idiot American tourists that, yes, we're queueing for PS3, and tells them we're 'waiting for a porn film' instead. The pretty newsreader turns up again, smiles at us a lot and asks us some questions which we still can't understand. The cameraman asks if he can film some stock footage of us eating and me reading the book I've brought – Bertrand Russell's History Of Western Philosophy. Sadly, the pretty news reader lady either can't read enough English to be impressed, or thinks I'm a ponce. She's still lovely, though.

11:30pm Caged and confused

Things in the queue are lovely as everyone settles down for the night. A

rumour goes around that there are 1000 PS3s in the nearby Yodabashi Camera shop – and the security guards have locked a thousand people in there with them. That's right – they're actually stuck behind the metal shutters without booze or a toilet, waiting for the fight that happens at dawn. We wander over to check it out, and though the security guards confirm that it's true, we're not allowed inside to take photos of them. Bloody hell.

By contrast, things are quite genteel in the Aso Bit City queue. Now that everyone's pretty sure they're going to get hold of a PlayStation 3, most people are drinking Hot Lemon Calpis (like a non-drug version of Lemsip) and nipping off for fried beef. Mmm, delicious.



Ken you dig it Ken was on hand inside a large Ginza shopping centre, where he 'sold' PS3s. For five minutes.

Queue gardens. No drive-by shootings in the Japanese lines, thanks. Not even with BB guns.

Midnight Games are better than philosophy

Starting to regret bringing the Bertrand Russell book instead of, say, a PSP and a copy of *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories*. What a ponce.

"I'll officially be getting the second PlayStation 3 ever"

2:00am Arousal is difficult when shattered

Nod off for half an hour – with, let's not forget, 800 quid in cold, hard yen in my pocket, and am woken up by Taiga shaking me and saying 'Maids!' What?! But, amazingly, it's true – the local 'Cure Maid Café', which dresses up its waitresses as French maids and makes them refer to customers as 'master' – have sent some of their staff out to flirt with people in the queue and pass out fliers. I'm sort of excited, but too tired to talk, let alone get off with a Japanese French maid.

3:00am The Japanese are hugely generous

One of my new friends from the queue takes pity on me and brings me a box of Maid-brand cookies. Christ knows where he got them from: it's three in the morning. Hmm. An actual maid would have been better.

5:30am Second place

The manager of the shop appears and dishes out tickets to everyone in the queue. I get ticket number two, which means I'll officially be getting the second PS3 in the world. Wow.

6:30am The waiting is nearly over

The shop staff turn up and rearrange us into yet another queue, so that every journalist in Japan can snap photos of us and interrogate us as we're waiting. I'm on the verge of collapsing and ignore them all.

7:00am It's the final countdown

The shop broadcasts a special Sony-generated countdown in the PS3 font on one of the hi-def TVs outside, and everybody cheers as it gets to one. From there, everything goes incredibly smoothly – we get led into the shop in threes, shepherded round an elaborate spiral of shelves specially arranged to stop us wandering off, and escorted to the till where someone shoves a PS3 in a bag and asks what accessories we want. Then we get escorted out of the shop, with staff waiting at various points on the stairs and outside to bow and give us a heartfelt 'arigato'. I'm surprised by how smoothly it's all gone.

7:06am PS3 – worth fighting for?

As I walk out of the shop, someone tells me that, as predicted, a massive fight has broken out at Yodabashi camera. I think about

What games are you going to buy?

Take your pick! (Out of a possible five...)

Taiga Ishikawa – First man in the queue. "All of them."

Vince – (left) has completed *God Hand*, so earns our undying respect. "*Resistance* and *Genji* – I like action games."

Queue-enforcing ex-pats. "Erm, what is there? *Ridge*, probably. And *Resistance: Fall Of Man*."

Queue-jumping Chinese bloke. "*Gundam*! Oh, and *Ridge*."

Pretty students "*Resistance: Fall Of Man* looks good. But we might sell our PS3s to pay for the flight out."

PS3 Launch

Game over Taiga and his mate, Dan G V2.0 and Joel pose for pics after bagging PS3s. Now, to fit it in the suitcase...

dashing over to take some snaps, then realize I'm carrying the kit they're currently fighting over. Time to get this baby under wraps. Quickly.

7:12am PS3 paranoia - I'm going to be mugged!

Uh oh... Two Americans shout "Hey, is that a Playstation 3?" as I march through the subway back towards my hotel. I immediately thinking about which one I'm going to punch first if they come any closer. "Yes," I say. "Cool", they reply, and wander off. I'm a bit jittery, all told.

7:15am Made it

I run up the hotel stairs and slam the door behind me. I've *actually done it*! Write a victorious blog for the www.psm3mag.com blog then go to bed for some well earned kip.

1:00pm Next-gen's here... and it's a bit bloody bulky

Wake up and encounter a new problem: The PS3 takes up my *entire bag*. I'm not going to be able to take anything else home. I decide to ignore this minor inconvenience in favour of going out buying comics and drinking celebratory booze. Yay!

5:30am The best plans are devised when pissed

Stagger into my room and come up with a brilliant new plan - I'll just roll all my clothes up and sort of tuck them around the edges. I still have to throw out of all of my spare pants and socks, a top and all of my presents for the team, but the new plan also protects PlayStation 3 from buffeting, so I feel like a space-genius. Then again, I have been drinking whisky for nearly eight hours. Whoa. Is that the time? Rush to the train station, then the airport.

6:00am Fragile? Yes, I am a bit, thanks

"Do you have anything... fragile *in your bag*?" asks the impossibly pretty lady at the check-in desk. "Erm... a PlayStation?" I say, torn between wanting a nice 'Fragile' sticker on my bag and not wanting her to know I'm exporting a PS3 in case it's somehow illegal. I'm worrying for no reason, though, because it doesn't look like she cares either way. Phew.

Between time zones Aeroplane fear hits

My plane hits turbulence on takeoff, and I immediately convince myself that I'm definitely going to die. Fortunately, I'm too weak to grab at any of the passing stewardesses or scream. Truly a blessing.

3:00pm Home, sweet home

My plane lands and I wander towards customs rehearsing my 'innocent' face ("What, officer? It's for my own personal use.") and my backup plan (sprint through the swing doors at the end of the Nothing To Declare channel, dodging gunfire until I can dive into the crowd waiting to meet their loved ones). Decide I should have told Nathan to bring a getaway car.

3:02pm You'll never take me ali... Oh...

Customs is totally empty. Feel oddly deflated. I wander through without a single question or anal examination.

4:00-7:00pm The final straight

Stand over my bag all the way back to Bath on an overcrowded train, then get ripped off by a cab driver on the way back to my house. Starting to miss Japan already.

10:00pm Zzzzz

Text Dan G v1.0 then sleep sweet sleep for hours, punctuated by dreams in which burglars are breaking in to steal the PS3. Wake up in a horrible cold sweat. At least, I *think* it's sweat.

9:00am The hero returns

Carry the PS3 to the PSM3 office. Everyone applauds as I walk in with it held proudly aloft, arms aching from the strain. I see the smiles on the faces of my friends, pose for pics and decide that it was all worth it.

9:01am That's gratitude...

"Blimey, you've scuffed the box a bit, haven't you?" says Rich. I think about killing him. Maybe next time.

No place like home Joel arrives in the office trumphant while Rich and Andy look on in (something approaching) awe.

How much did it all cost?

So, was it worth it?

Plane tickets: £450
Assorted train tickets: £30
Hotel*: £60
Miniature camping chair: £7.50
Doughnuts, gyudon and onigiri: £3.50
Pants, socks (thrown away): £10
PlayStation 3: £277
Two games: £80
Extra pad: £25

*You won't really need a hotel, when *you* do this for PS4, 'cos you'll sleep on the street, right?

"I'm carrying the kit they're currently fighting over. Time to get this baby under wraps. Quickly"

Special delivery (We're still trying to prize it out of Joel's vice-like Ninja grip.)

WIN OUR PS3 NOW!

Yes, Joel didn't queue for days just to get us a new toy. He did it so we could give away a PS3 to you lot. Time to get creative...

Want this PS3, then? Course you do. But as Joel slept on the streets for days just to get it, we're not just going to hand it over. We want you to 'impress us' – most impressive entry wins the prize.

What do we mean by 'impress us'? Well, you can do anything you think would impress us – draw a picture, make a piece of music, re-enact the plot of *Final Fantasy XII* with puppets and video it, do a skydive with the PSM3 logo on your parachute, write a novel about the lives and loves of Sonic and chums, appear on telly dressed as Kao the Kangaroo... whatever. Make YouTube vids, send us MP3s, photos, whatever. The only limit is your imagination – except, and this is the only condition, we *don't* just want to receive things you've already done in the past. We want new ideas, brought to fruition with this competition in mind.

Closing date is January 15 2007 and the winner will be invited down to meet the team (all expenses paid) and pick up their prize. Best of luck.

Post: That's PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW, or **Email:** send links, pics, anything to psm3@futurenet.co.uk, subject line 'Win A PS3'. Entries in by January 15, winner notified by January 22.

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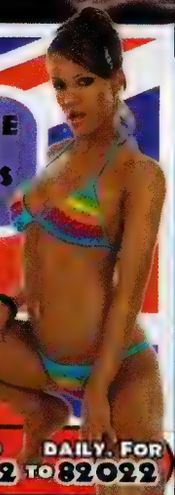

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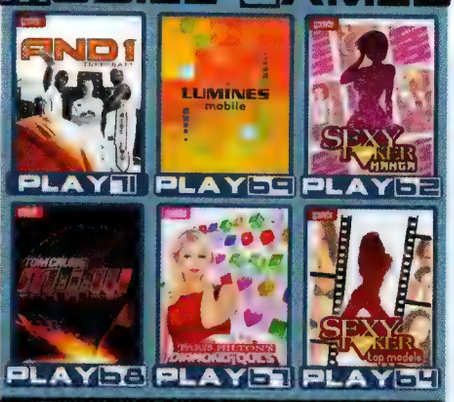

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PSM3 Reviews

Instant PlayStation justice

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"Metropolis looks like a pub toilet"

Superman Returns page 70

PSM3 review scoring system

0-29 Rubbish
An absolute stinker and an insult to gaming. The makers should be ashamed.

30-49 Poor
Why did they do that? Some simple playtesting could have worked wonders.

50-69 All right
Hey it works, and we can see what they were trying to do. And that's about it.

70-84 Good
Worth playing, especially if you're a fan of the genre. It just lacks that touch of greatness.

85-89 Superb
This is the sweet spot. If a game scores in this zone it's definitely worth your money.

90+ Amazing
You must get this. Failure to do so would mean missing out on a real console classic.

PSM3 BUY IT

The Award
If you see this, then you should buy that game.

The Team | Meet our regular reviews squad

Daniel Griffiths
Specialist in Driving, action and growing dreadlocks... ?!
Playing *Ridge 7:* "Hey, that's not me! That's the *other* Dan G!"

Daniel Dawkins
Specialist in Extreme sports, growing taches, being topless
Playing *Project 8:* "I intend to be the world's campest skater."

Nathan Irvine
Specialist in Sports games and looking vaguely suspicious.
Playing *Resistance:* "I want the sequel, *Brotherhood Of Man.*"

Andy Kelly
Specialist in Role-players, retro, and buying expensive coats.
Playing *Okami:* "Because I'm hungry. Hungry like the wolf."

David Cook
Specialist in Shooters, platformers and hangovers.
Playing *Kingdom Hearts 2:* "I identify strongly with Donald."

Joel Snape
Specialist in Extreme sports, scrappers and queueing.
Playing *MK Unchained:* "I used the moves on queue-jumpers."

Disagree with our reviews? Email your outraged rant to **psm3@futurenet.co.uk**

Pub Sony | **Dev** Insomniac
Price £50 | **Release** Out now (import)
Multi-player 1–2 co-op, 2–40 online

ON THE DISC
See another PS3 FPS – *Unreal Tournament 2007*

Resistance Fall Of Man

IMPORT

PSM3 BUY IT

Mankind may fall, but PS3 shooters are on the rise...

KNOW IT NOW

- **Stacks of six-eyed aliens to blast?** ✓
- **A visit to Cheddar Gorge** ✓
- **The most original grenades... ever!** ✓
- **Sun-licked fields and jaunty soundtrack** ✗

There's a fair amount of hype surrounding this game. *Resistance: Fall Of Man* has, like *Killzone* years ago, been touted as PlayStation's answer to *Halo*. So this foray into alien inhabited lands, brought to you by the men behind *Ratchet And Clank*, has a lot to live up to. And after our first hands-on with the preview build, we weren't convinced. "It's like a poor man's *Half-Life 2*," we grumbled. "Why is it so hard?" we barked as another merciless alien attack ended another life (more on that later). "The Chimera all look the bloody same," noted mardy Dave, failing to remember that all the Nazis in *Call Of Duty 3* wear uniforms. But when the finished article dropped on our desks, *Resistance* had changed. The difficulty's been toned down and the action factor's been ramped up. And it's a lot better than we'd ever expected for a launch game.

Playing as US Sergeant Nathan Hale, you travel to an apocalyptic Blighty (circa 1940) to help the Brits destroy the vicious Chimera, an alien race who aim to spread their zombie-like disease across the world. Unfortunately for you, the enemies have the weapons and sheer aggression to make light work of Hale and his buddies, which they do as you battle through the game's opening stage, the streets of York. It's not until the end of this level that the story unfolds. One minute you're back-slapping your buddies as you make it to the rendezvous point and the next there's a swarm of alien cockroaches scurrying over your body and down your throat. Grim.

Heal or no heal

But, while your chums lie there deader than doorknobs, you somehow get to your feet and push on to the next fight. Basically, Hale's now infected and starts to display traits akin to the Chimera – like regenerating health after a few seconds relaxation, which certainly comes in handy when pinned down by gunfire. The first hour or so is a hard slog, mind you, but

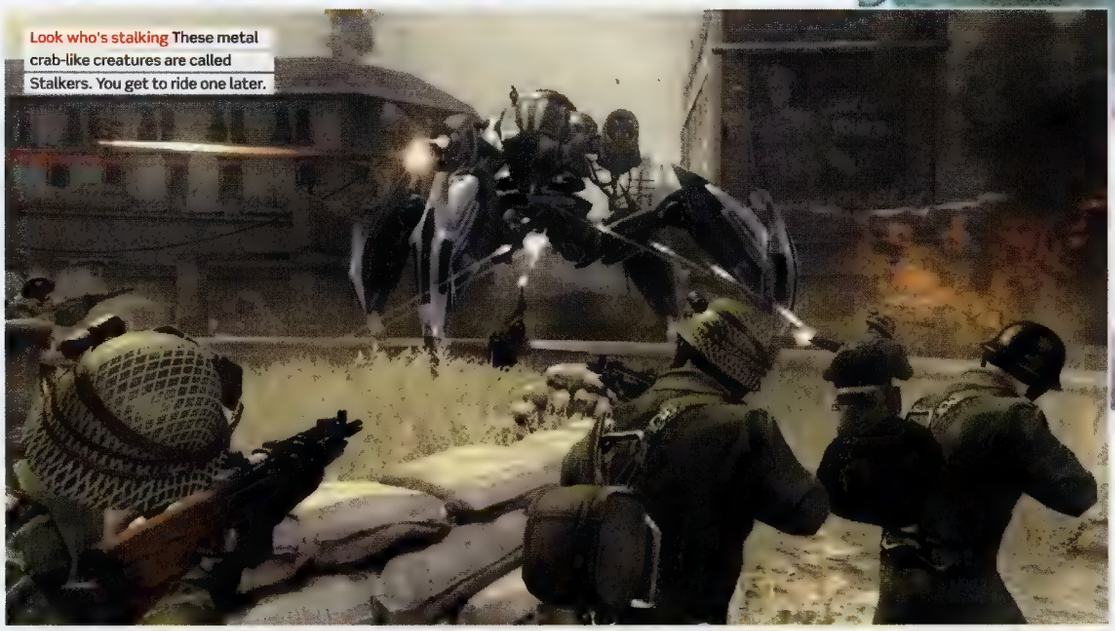
Who scares wins While you'll be fearlessly stomping through the streets of Blighty you'll come across some of your comrades getting 'pwned' by Chimera. Softies.

Resistance Fall Of Man

"There's a swarm of alien cockroaches swarming down your throat"

"Fall Of Man has a lot to live up to"

Having a blast Reeling off a few rounds into the attacking aliens feels massively satisfying.



Look who's stalking These metal crab-like creatures are called Stalkers. You get to ride one later.

this ability proves just as important as the guns in your hands. And it's not long before you get hold of the Chimera's devastating weapons and can ram their laser treats back down their throats. It's here that *Resistance* really comes into its own, as the range of guns and grenades on offer puts any realism-based FPS's arsenal firmly in the shade.

A rifling matter

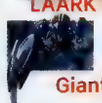
Examples? Well, accompanying the standard assault rifle with rocket launcher attachment and the double-barreled shotgun, there's also the bullseye. This piece of kit is standard issue for the Chimera grunts but it's only really devastating when it's in *your* hands. It fires rapid bolts of plasma like an uzi – which means it's inaccurate from range, but devastating up close. But its big trick is that you can hit L1 to tag your foe so that your shots home in on them – excellent for those blind attacks from cover. Also worth a mention are the hedgehog and air-fuel grenades. When a hedgehog grenade explodes, it fires loads of deadly quills into everyone within range, while the air-fuel lets off a plume of gas then ignites the fumes to light up the enemy like giant, screaming sparklers. The kettle-like whistle as the grenade primes itself and the whoosh of charring flames is massively satisfying in itself and lobbing these packages of pain will take out a gang of charging Chimera with little fuss. There's a genius addition to the sniper rifle too. Hold L1 and you'll enter focus mode, which slows down the action enough for you to take aim on your soon-to-be-dead target. Hit R1 and bang, they're going down. The weapons on show are truly great – but of course this arsenal needs some fodder to slaughter in order to really excel and *Resistance* doesn't let you down.

Chairmen of the horde Take out the biggest and angriest fella first and the other aliens will panic and run for cover.

Stat bastard

During this review we unashamedly blew up...

36 LAARK guided-missiles



15 Giant Stalkers

04 Squid-like flying aliens

08 Types of chimera

40 Hedgehog grenades

There are quite a few species of Chimera loitering about the place. From the aggressive footsoldiers to equally angry behemoths wielding fireball bazookas, *Resistance* is packed with enemies. There's even a gangly one that sprints towards you like an angry Stephen Merchant. Each of the new aliens offers a fresh challenge to your tactics. Do you use the sniper rifle to pick off the speedy wall-leapers or do you rush into them with your shotgun blazing? Should you lay some acid bubble mines to cover your tracks from the pursuing pack or wait until they're in range and launch into an auto-turret, which will pepper them mercilessly with deadly bouncing bullets? Decisions, decisions.

Stalking the stalk

But even when you think you've got it all sussed out, *Resistance* has a habit of throwing up something even nastier than before. Take the Stalkers, for instance. They look like a hybrid of ED-209 from the

Armour deadly breed These fellas are covered in metal, so they're a little bit harder to bring down.

Robocop movies and a particularly large spider as they quickly scamper across the terrain, blasting off rockets and chucking bullets around with their rapid-fire gun turrets. They can take a fair bit of work to bring down, but they have got a weak spot, which we won't spoil for you. Brilliantly, *Resistance* surprised us by letting us drive them around later in the game. You also get to bomb about in a nippy jeep (with a mounted gun for a mate on the back) and a heavy-duty tank that can clear a rather bloody path with its rockets. Sweet.

And you can play online too. See the supplement free with this issue for the full lowdown on how *Resistance* online works, suffice to say that it works 'great', whether you're in a select deathmatch with a few of your mates or going balls-out in a 40-strong team game. It's impressive and glitch free – a real surprise for a launch game.

Bad guys

Know your alien invaders

They all share a common dental problem, but each type of Chimera offers a different test

The standard one This is your most common enemy. Because they're part human, these soldiers react in realistic ways – like hiding behind cover and working as a team.

The crawling one These guys are like Spider-Man without the suit. They can quickly leap and stick to walls, making them hard to kill. You'd be wise to use the slo-mo ability of the sniper rifle.

The lanky one This skinny giant looks massively aggressive, but it's fairly useless. Its big skill is that it can sprint and be upon you in a frighteningly short moment.

The swarming one Bursting out of open pipes or eggs are these spindly things. They roll and climb walls around you so make sure you're on your toes when they come.

The worker one Although these lumbering oafs don't wield any weapons, they'll march toward you and grab you by the throat. You need to waggle the pad to get rid.

The spewing one This super-spider scuttles across the land like a deadly machine. You'll need to take it down with rockets as its durable skin and toxic blob-mines will really melt your face. Ouch.

Fave Feature

Locations

A tour of Great Britain

How do the cities of *Resistance* compare to their real life counterparts? Answer: Not well

York The architecture of the quaint town houses really looks similar. Although we're pretty sure they're not filled with aliens.

LIKENESS 8/10

Manchester Ship canal? Check. Boddington's brewery chimney? Check. Kids smoking tabs and saying 'sound'? No? Pretty good tho'.

LIKENESS 8/10

Cheshire This is a massively plush area of the north west. Sadly, you only get to see some tunnels beneath it. Rubbish.

LIKENESS 2/10

Bristol Rolling landscape and trees? What about a load of oiks smoking around the back of the shopping centre? A missed opportunity.

LIKENESS 4/10

Cheddar Gorge The little villages surrounding Somerset's landmark are detailed and bombing about in the Gorge itself is ace. Good one.

LIKENESS 10/10

Resistance Fall Of Man

"An incredibly slick and exciting PlayStation 3 showcase"

Grimsby Another underground level, but it reflects the real Grimsby perfectly by being dank, miserable and depressing.

LIKENESS 2/10

Nottingham You can see the Trent building in some scenes, but sadly there's no trip to Sherwood Forest or Robin Hood. Shame.

LIKENESS 7/10

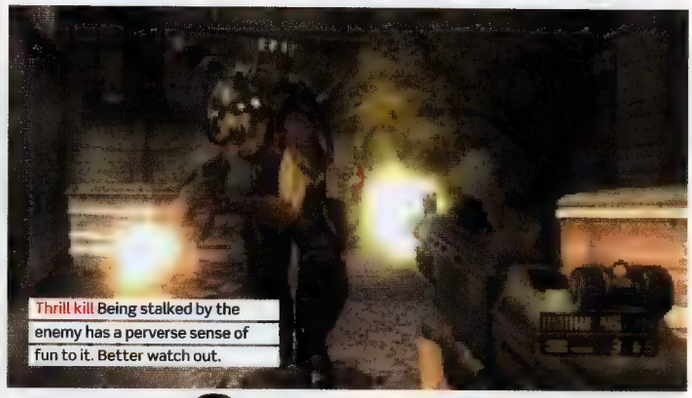
London All the landmarks are here. An old train station, a fruit market, Tower Bridge – and a giant alien spire in the centre.

LIKENESS 9/10

Bracknell We've never been to Bracknell, never mind a cave there. But we guess it wouldn't have Chimeras hiding in it.

LIKENESS 1/10

Ivor big-gun You'll pick up new weapons along the way, like this huge blaster. Baooom!



Thrill kill Being stalked by the enemy has a perverse sense of fun to it. Better watch out.

Speak out

There's loads of UK dialect, with troops' accents ranging from Manc to broad Cock-er-nee. What's rhyming slang for "there's a Martian knawing at my kneecaps"?

But, while *Resistance* is action-packed and full of little set-pieces – such as when a helicopter is attacked by a giant squid-like creature (known as an angel) – the story doesn't flow terribly well. Each of the destinations – barely recognisable apart from Cheddar Gorge and London – just feel like bog-standard first-person shooter arenas. You never really get a sense of achievement as you complete a level, as all you'll see is a lifeless cut-scene or a black and white still to piece together the rest of your quest in a particularly uninvolving way. And you never really find yourself warming to the near-mute potato-faced Hale.

But all the same, you can't go far wrong with *Resistance: Fall Of Man*. For a first stab at a first-person shooter, Insomniac have produced an incredibly slick, exciting PS3 showcase. Buy it alongside your new machine in March and get to see what all the fuss is about. **Nathan Irvine**

PSM3 Verdict

***Resistance: Fall Of Man* contains...**
Tons of aliens | A moody hero | Big guns
The lovely British countryside

Overall Too hard at times, but this beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain makes for a great shooter.

90

PS3

Pub Sony | **Dev** Evolution Studios
Price ¥9800 | **Release** Out now (import)
Multi-player 1-16 (online)

ON THE DISC

Watch more MotorStorm in next month's new movie. Plus Flatout: Ultimate Carnage.

Nice behind If you click down R3 while in first-person mode, you can look behind you like this.

MotorStorm

Grab your mud-proof mac – a storm is coming

IMPORT

KNOW IT NOW

As exciting as *that* E3 teaser trailer?	☑
One of the best-looking games ever?	☑
Harder than *actual* off-road racing?	☑
Varied, fresh, novel and genre-busting?	☒

PSM3 BUY IT

Had enough of predictable racing games? Of listlessly nudging hatchbacks around grey ovals? Of attaching stickers to the sides of Japanese sports cars? Us too, which is why we have the hots for *MotorStorm*. In every race you're running a chaotic gauntlet of erratic physics, hostile AI and dangerous muddy slop. And it demands intense concentration because no two races are ever the same – by the third lap the course will have been carved and smeared into a brown sludge, mutilated objects and pulverised car shells blocking every turn. It's a game that uses its complex physics engine as a core element, rather than a gimmick that'll add an extra bullet point to the press release.

There are six vehicle classes to choose from – bikes, buggies, mud pluggers, big rigs, rally cars and ATVs. And because they're all so different we're going to go through them one by one. So, bikes – they're our favourite. At the expense of being easily knocked off you can weave through small spaces and packs of other cars. Furthermore, if an ATV or fellow bike rider is nearby, you can press ⓑ to punch them and knock them flying into the muck. Next, buggies. They have the all the haste of a bike, but benefit from being much more robust. You can really jerk them around and, if you're skilled, can barrel across rocky areas without flipping out and crashing. Their biggest drawback is that it doesn't take much for them to explode – nick a sharp edge and you're done for.

You little plugger

Mud pluggers? We'd never heard of them, but they sort of look like car-shaped buggies. They're our least favourite. They feel slow and twitchy and prone to rolling over more than an 'injured' Premiership footballer. But as the name suggests, when it comes to deep mud they're a godsend, allowing you to slice through oceans of the stuff like a hot knife through butter. Big rigs are a mixed bag. As much

Pulling rank As you move up the race class levels your opponents get much more aggressive and will hound you until you panic, spin out, crash and die. Fiends.

Twist and shout In this track you avoid the mud by sliding up these huge banked areas. Exciting stuff.

Break stuff Almost everything you see can be knocked about. In one track there's a shed you can drive into and completely destroy. A nice, if pointless, extra detail.

Mud brothers Cut into the mud and you can see the wetness glisten in the sun. Dead pretty.

as we dislike their woeful lack of speed, ploughing through the starting block and sending bikes spiralling to their doom is a twisted thrill. As for the rally cars, Evolution Studios were the developers behind the excellent *WRC* games, so they feel fantastic to drive. Like the mud pluggers they flip easily, but they have an even spread of weight and feel huskier than the other vehicles. Finally, the redneck's favourite, the ATV. They're basically four-wheeled bikes and we hate them. They're too bouncy and waifish.

And part of the game's strategy is choosing the right vehicle. The dusty canyon corkscrews of Sidewinder Ridge benefit from being at the handlebars of a bike, while sticky slop-fest The Mudpool suits big rigs and buggies down to the filthy, grimy ground. Another element of strategy comes in the form of boosting. By pressing ⊗ you can steadily increase your speed, flames spewing from your exhaust pipe. But you have a temperature gauge so if you boost for too long you'll literally explode. A good technique for wide corners and muddy areas that slow you down is to boost into the bend *Ridge Racer*-style. Whether or not this was intended is unclear, but it becomes a superior alternative to braking and it'll quickly bury itself into your subconscious.

The tracks on offer are all – as the screenshots suggest – desert-based. It's a rhapsody in orange and red, with only the time of day helping to shift the colour palette. Moonlit night races are particularly atmospheric, and the scorching auburn sun of the early evening really shows off PS3's sophisticated light rendering.

Actually, *everything* looks beautiful. We all expected it, but you really don't *understand* until you're sat down in front of it. The elaborately-detailed textures, beefy car models, raucous physics and shimmering reflections make PS2 look laughably low-tech. Pause the game at any time – during a crash or takeoff from a ramp for example – and you can spin and zoom the camera freely, admiring every impeccable detail. We must have spent half

Shake, rattle and roll

You can use tilt to steer, but we'll be honest and say that it's rubbish and ruins the game. So there.

MotorStorm

"Exactly as we'd imagine off-road racing – volatile and merciless"

Rebel yell Bikers and ATV riders are real swines. They regularly punch the air when you crash or flip you the bird if you try to nudge them. Flatten them with a rig, we say.

Smash and grab Bikes and ATVs are fast and great fun, but always come off worst in collisions.

an hour doing this during one race, crashing on purpose just to ogle the splinters, bolts and springs exploding from our motor's frazzled carcass. Our one visual gripe? The spectators look *shit*. They're flat like ironed paper and completely motionless.

Noise annoys

Sonically, however, it needs some work. The rattle and engine thrum of the amassed vehicles blends into one ear-shredding, cacophonous growl and drowns out the excellent soundtrack. Among its licensed tracks are hits by Primal Scream, Kings Of Leon and Queens Of The Stone Age and dozens others, which suits the mood of the game – the concept of *MotorStorm* is that you're at some kind of mega desert festival watching live bands and taking part in dangerous Paris Dakar Rally-style races and an excellent 'Festival' mode guides you through the tracks and cars in a huge series of compulsory races.

But above all, it's the liveliness of the races that makes *MotorStorm* so playable. It can be unforgivingly difficult and one crash can literally end your entire race – losing you ten places as the rest of the throng go tearing past your bent, busted motor – but it's exactly as we'd imagine real off-roading to feel – volatile and merciless, like you're always on the edge and struggling for control.

In terms of 'next generation-ness' *MotorStorm* is everything we hoped for. It's something you genuinely couldn't see running on another console and something that actually makes dropping a couple of grand on an HD telly seem worthwhile. Our only concern is that it's a one trick pony. Once you're sick of random argy bargy off-roading there's very little avenue to grow any genuine *skill*. And with only eight tracks being re-used again and again at different times of day you will soon see it all. But forget about that for now – you *will* love it, and you *will* play it for hours. What more praise do you need? **Andy Kelly**

Ticket master

Move through the game's career mode by unlocking and completing event tickets. Some events are great, but others (which deliberately mis-match terrain and vehicle) and are an almighty pain.

Fave Feature

"Smashing your motor into a million pieces."

PSM3 Verdict

***MotorStorm* contains...**

Mud | Lots of mud | Seriously, loads of mud
You won't believe how much mud, honest

Overall Tough, dynamic racing. A blistering thrill ride that makes good on PlayStation 3's promises.

88

Pub Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Price $59 | **Release** Out now (import)
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC

Tricked out Visit the skate shop at as you progress through the game and you'll be treated to new deck styles and designs.

IMPORT

Tony Hawk's Project 8

The skateboarding series goes back to its roots and is all the better for it

KNOW IT NOW

- The eighth *Tony Hawk* game ☑
- A bigger Hawk than ever *before*? ☑
- Tricky Sixaxis control? ☑
- Online multi-player modes? ☒

While it's no secret that it's been a long time since Tony Hawk gave us anything to get truly excited about, game-wise, it's almost as if he didn't want to be left out of PS3's lavish launch party. So he's timed his return just right.

Taking a step back from the story-focused (and frankly ridiculous) antics of *Underground* and *American Wasteland*, *Tony Hawk's Project 8* returns us to what the series is all (and should have always been) about... the skateboarding.

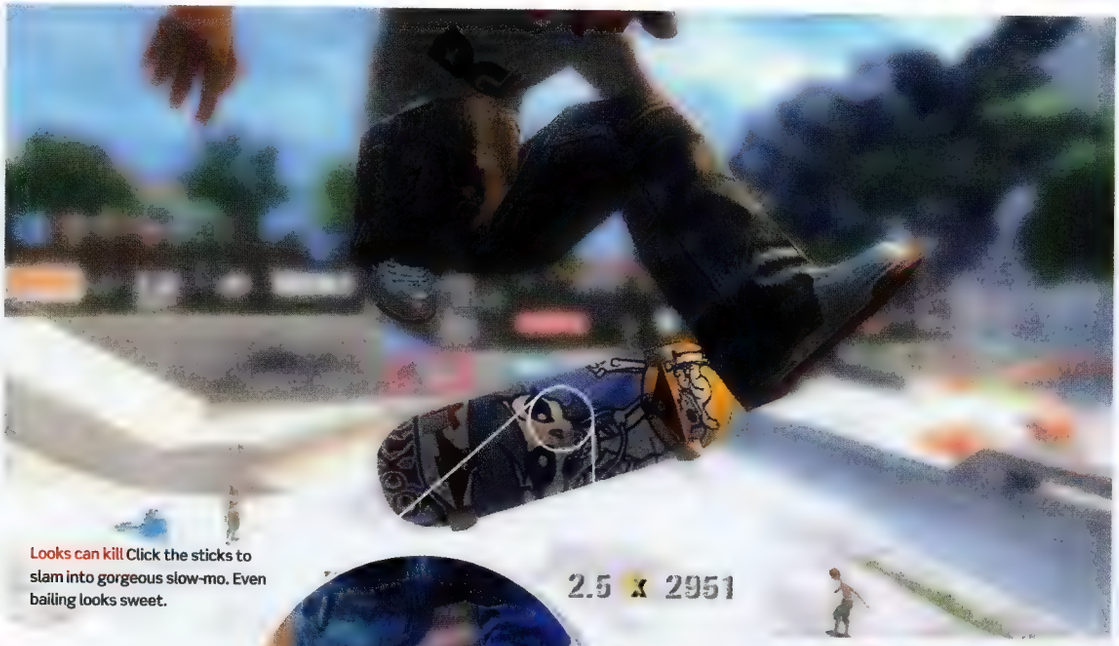
Odds are that very few of you know anyone who's actually any good on a skateboard. Like, *really* good. Someone who can effortlessly break out gravity defying action that'll make passers by stop and stare? Thought not. Because skateboarding is *really* hard, which is why this years top innovation, Nail The Trick mode, is so damn fine – everyone can shine and it's one of the most obvious advancements for the series that we could ever have imagined...

You've nailed it

As you're tearing through the world of *Project 8*, grinding on picnic tables at the school, kick-flipping over roller coasters at the funfair or pulling off Frontside 180s at the car factory, a simple click of the analogue sticks is all it takes to throw the entire Hawkiverse into pure, eyeball-melting slow-motion – zooming in on your feet and putting the control of each leg onto the left and right sticks, allowing you to truly *play with the board* as you fly through the air, adding trick after trick to your combo. It's amazing to see, quick to master and it'll make your mates' jaws drop every time. And that's what a 'great new feature' is all about.

Meanwhile, *THP8* features the sort of challenge-based storyline we've come to expect from the series over the years. Basically, Tones is looking for the top skaters in town to assemble a team – Project 8. You start off as a no-name punk, ranked number 200, who dreams of becoming part of Project 8 – and if you play your deck right, number one.

Making it that far takes work: Spot challenges, puzzle challenges and bail challenges – in which you're rewarded for breaking bones – are necessary achievements, with classic two-minute goal challenges also making a return. Each challenge has three levels of completion – amateur, pro, and sick – and, rather than choose your game difficulty from the start-up screen, you're able to revisit challenges at any time to better your score. The game supports Sixaxis control, too, although this only really works for balancing in grinds or manuals – where, after a little practice, it actually makes them easier. When it comes



Looks can kill Click the sticks to slam into gorgeous slow-mo. Even bailing looks sweet.

Tricky situation There are, as ever, twelve million (ish) tricks for you to master. Go for it.

to controlling your character, forget it.

Skate for it

With the vast graphical upgrade supplied by the PS3, this is easily the best-looking *Hawk* game yet. Yet it's not without its flaws. It would seem, in an effort to tighten gameplay and offer a fresh approach to the series, the 'acknowledged for excellence' *Tony Hawk* frame-rate has taken an unfortunate knock. At times the game can chug, leaving you wondering whether the fully-streaming world was necessary and longing for the smaller but smooth restraints of yesteryear. Thankfully these stutters are few and far between and while irritating, they fail to completely tarnish the overall experience. The limited customisation of characters available is poor, for sure... but it's the complete absence of any online play that is truly unforgivable. Still, despite that, it's a solid back-to-basics return to the glory days of the *Hawk*, hampered only by the missing online features and the occasional rough edge. Long may he reign. **Mike Oldman**

Fame academy *Project 8* features celebs like Jason Lee, Bam Margera and of course, Tony Hawk. PS3 hasn't been kind though – they look like zombies.

Fave Feature

PS2 Review

Tony Hawk's Project 8

It's on PS2 too y'know. But which version is best?

What have they changed?

In fairness, it's a fair approximation of the PS3 game, with the core game structure and 'Nail The Trick' mode intact – the slow-mo effects are hugely impressive for PS2. Sadly, the 'free roaming' world has been stripped back to separate levels with sizey loading times, though, in fairness, there's a diverting real life skate video playing as they load. The PS3's physics-based momentum system doesn't seem to play a big part, and the animation is generally less expressive, as you'd expect. We're impressed by the scale and diversity of the world's geometry, but level design is bad, while aping the PS3 version seems to have resulted in some alarmingly chunky visuals. With no hi-def available, the opening level looks like it's been rendered with party balloons. There's no Park Editor and the Player Create options are terribly limited too. Odder yet, you can't skate through shallow water on PS2, unlike PS3. Still, a surprisingly decent conversion, with few compromises.

Worth buying if you've got the PlayStation 3 version?

No, but seeing as nobody has a PS3 in the UK yet, it's good enough to tide you over. Well, sort of. It's arguably the best in the series since *THPS3* for real-life skaters, having ditched the Jackass angle and implemented a slower feel, but the level design is lazy and lacks genuinely memorable set pieces.

Better or worse?

Visually, it's considerably worse, but quite decent for PS2 and retains the core gameplay. If you can't wait for PS3 pick this up instead.

74

PSM3 Verdict

***Tony Hawk's Project 8* contains...**

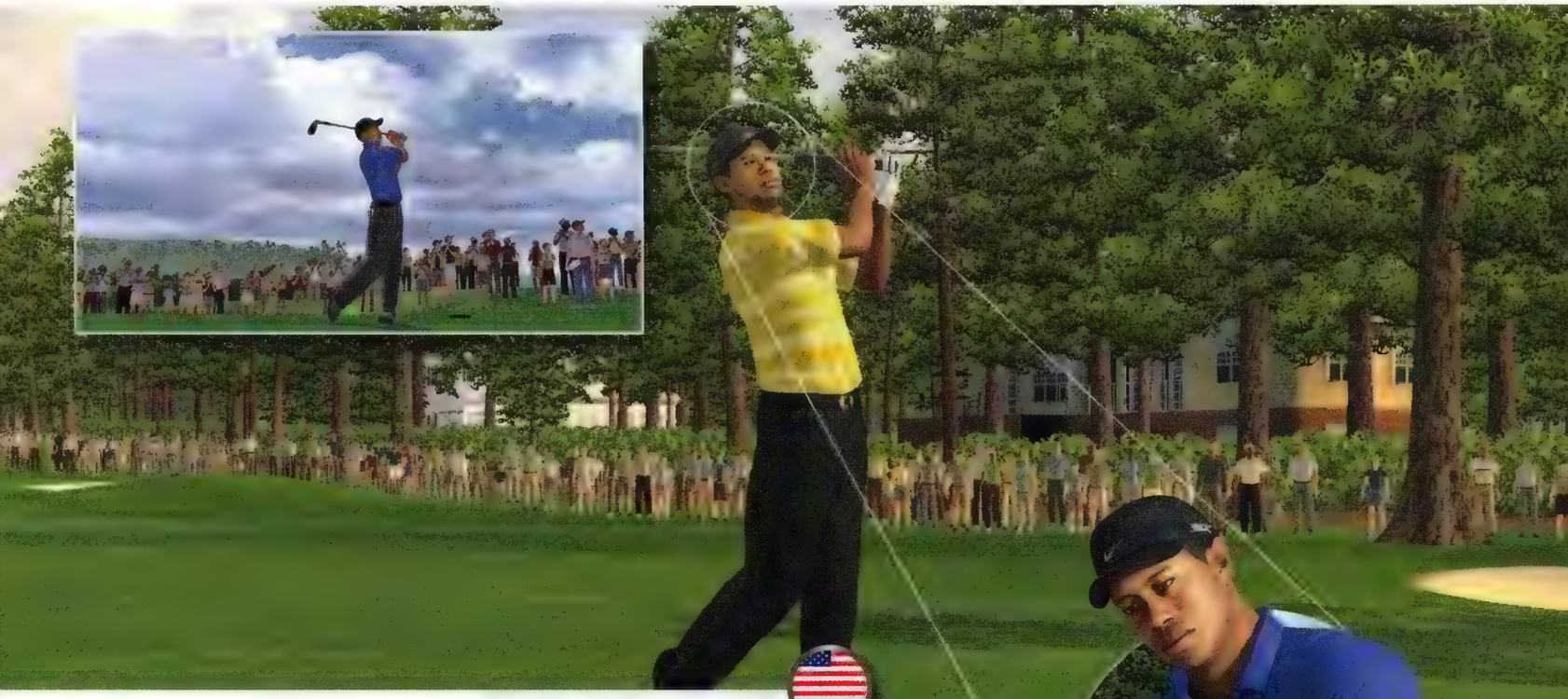
Gorgeous slow-mo | Massive environments
Creepy-looking characters | No online play

Overall Tony's back and, although it feels like he got here in a hurry, he's still delivering the goods.

80

Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Price $59 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-8 online

ON THE DISC
Enjoy Tiger in action on this month's disc



IMPORT

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07

The world's top golf pro finally gets to show off

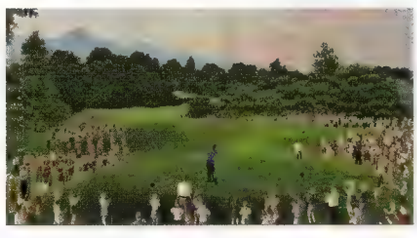
Face facts It might not sound much, but the amazing new Tiger really makes *07* feel far more realistic.

A few months ago, back in issue number 80, we were moaning about *Tiger Woods* on PS2. And *Tiger Woods* on PSP for that matter. We said that they've pushed the game "as far as it can go and are killing time while we wait for the PS3 game." We even went so far as to say that "PS3 *Tiger* will be brilliant." Hmm. Bold. But that's how we felt after seeing the same game over and over since 2003. Only an injection of major PS3 horsepower could make a difference to one of the most enduring series in videogames.

Wood you believe it

And that's exactly what *Tiger* has just got. A shot in the arm of pure PS3 power. Or rather a shot in the eyes. Tiger PS3 just looks *loads* better than you've ever seen it before. Suddenly the game has the oomph to draw hundreds of spectators, show bushes, trees and rolling grass expanding in sumptuous detail right off into the horizon. The obligatory pre-shot flyover now feels like you've strapped on rocket boots and genuinely flown hundreds of feet into the air. And Tiger's face. *Tiger's face*! This time the motion-capping includes every grimace or grin. And the game loves showing him off – there's a reaction from the great man for every shot. You really get the impression that the team are finally being let loose and are dining out royally on everything the PS3 can offer.

Screen furniture, such as the familiar power bars, look pin-sharp. The game is able to heap on indicators about your distance from the hole, your lie, your shot, all without encroaching on the fast swathes of green space in the middle. For once (at last) you can actually get an impression of the shot you have to perform because (like real golf) you can frikkin' see it on the screen. The slope of the green, the thickness of the rough. All the indicators are there, but to hell with them: The grass now actually looks thick – so hit it a bit harder.



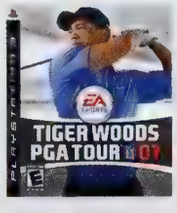
Sixaxis in 'good use' shocker

Tilt the pad and put spin on an airborne ball. Much better than biffing buttons, really.

And the new True Aiming system feels more realistic too. Now, like a real golfer, you aim, you strike and the ball goes somewhere like where you want it. Not perfectly on the money if you've over practised. Golf is a bit random, go with it.

And there's 15 full courses on board. 15! And the series' famous Game Face mode is here (and more frightening and grotesque than ever). Everything else? It's just the same as you remember it – i.e. the best golf game you can buy. **Daniel Griffiths**

PSM3 Verdict



***Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07* contains...**
Amazing scenery detail | 12 great courses
Good tilt pad usage | Scarily realistic Tiger

Overall Finally. Instead of piling on the modes and features, we get a visibly superior *Tiger*. Great work.

82

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Pub Sega | **Dev** Sonic Team
Price £30 plus £7.49 per month | **Release** Out now
Multi-player It's massively multi-player. Obviously.

ON THE DISC
See more of *Phantasy Star* on next month's disc

Cool Move
As well as normal attacks you can build up a number of Photon strikes and 'Tecnics' – magical attacks – depending on your class of character. Add these attacks to your current weapon and you can cause massive damage to your enemies.

Phantasy Star Universe

We're desperate for a good reason to take our PS2s online... but this isn't it

KNOW IT NOW

Massively multi-player missions?	☑
Massively tough and challenging?	☑
Crazy character customisation?	☑
Massively entertaining fun?	☒

There's nothing we love here at PSM3 more than putting on a blue wig and skimpy outfit and hanging about shopping malls, dancing and chatting up strangers. And there's nothing wrong with that. Anyway, we were, therefore, very excited about the prospect of *Phantasy Star Universe*. Of course there's a little more to the game than just customising your characters, putting them in stupid clothes and showing them off to other online gamers – although if we're brutally honest, not a *lot* more – but *PSU* is one of very few truly massively multi-player online RPGs available to PS2 gamers. More than that, Sega promised us that *Phantasy Star Universe* would also offer a complete and worthy single-player game with an in-depth storyline and compelling offline gameplay. And have they done that? Oh, you've looked at the score at the end already, what do you think?

Playing with yourself

Before stumbling about the online game trying to find our feet like an overgrown baby, however, we thought we'd take a pop at the single-player mode. You play Ethan Waber, a disgruntled youth who goes from hating the Guardians, the elite force who have to save the galaxy from the evil SEED invasion, to joining them and becoming a great hero. The chapters – which play out like a TV show, complete with "Next time on *Phantasy Star Universe*!" epilogues – are really there just to string together dungeon-crawling missions that are boring, samey and grinding. The enemies look like big walking turds and the battling consists of mashing ⓡ with the occasional use of wait for it... △. Could it be any more exciting? (Answer: yes, definitely.)

The weapon, skills and armour customisation is reasonably good motivation to keep battling away, mind you, but ultimately playing *Phantasy Star Universe* in single-player mode makes you feel as if Sega have made exactly what

Phantasy Star Universe

"Sega have made exactly what they said they wouldn't – a game that feels empty"

Monstrously monotonous The monsters have little variety in how they look or behave.

Pretty boy Character animations look attractive and smooth. Not very interesting, though.

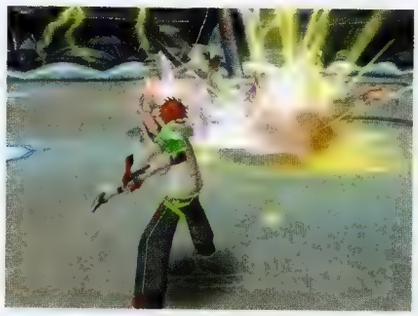
they had been saying they wouldn't – a game that feels empty, an afterthought to the online mode, and completely built using the multi-player game as a template rather than utilising the more complex possibilities that are available offline. The best thing about the offline game is that between every single chapter they play the fantastically awful theme song, translated directly (it seems) from the Japanese version. It doesn't have any rhythm, it doesn't make sense – but it does have brilliant lyrics like "You know I'm not afraid of bleeding. It is the time!" It gets better with every listen.

Dull and duller

Online? Well, we won't keep you in suspense. Almost every element of *Phantasy Star Universe* is a crashing disappointment, and nothing like as good as the Dreamcast game from which this title's reputation sprang. After a very brief tutorial you'll pretty much be left to wander around trying to work out what to do and attempting to engage other players in conversation. Without voice chat communication, which is of course available on other formats, you'll be reliant on a keyboard to get to know other players and hopefully get into a party of up to six. Once you've made some friends, there are three worlds – as well as your base – which have various missions available. Each world looks different and has its own city and shops for you to spend your hard-earned cash in – and it will be hard-earned. The missions are all incredibly samey, simple dungeon-crawling episodes which don't get any more interesting the more you level up.

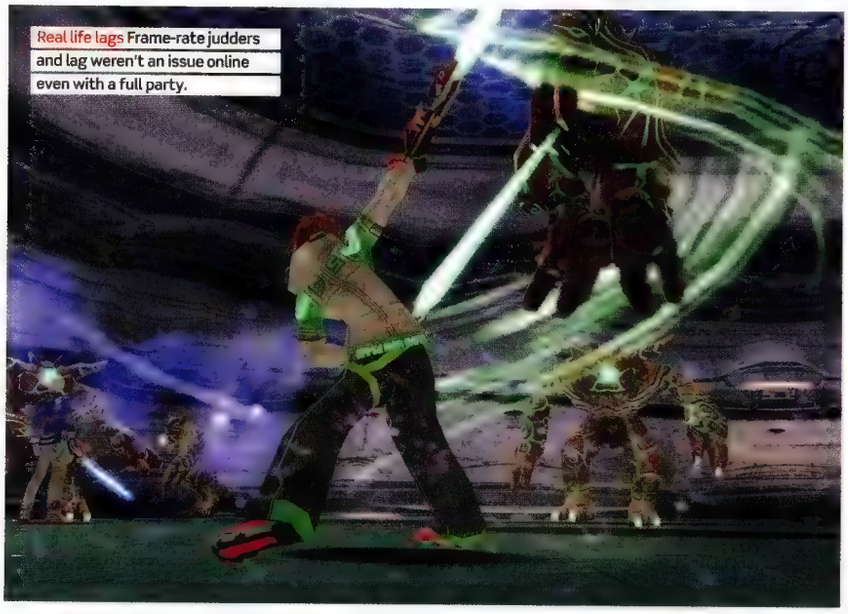
The loot drops, too – gained when you defeat an enemy – are incredibly stingy, so it takes ages to buy yourself some upgrades. You'd almost think Sega were trying to make you play for months on end to get anywhere in the game at all, and with a £7.49 per month subscription fee, that would be very naughty of them. Graphically, meanwhile, the whole thing manages to look oddly dull and drab, despite the bright colour palette.

Phantasy Star fans will be sorely disappointed in this after having waited so long for it, while those new to massively multi-player online role-playing games might want to save their pennies and stick with some great offline RPGs like *Dragon Quest*, *Kingdom Hearts 2* or *Final Fantasy 12*. *Phantasy Star Universe*? A big phat waste of your money. **Kirsten Kearney**



Never ending story The storyline in single-player mode is preposterous. It's like Hollyoaks 2100.

Beat the L33t Make sure you learn some suitable 'l33t' words before you venture online. Saves on typing, see.



Real life lags Frame-rate judders and lag weren't an issue online even with a full party.

Room raider

One of the few fun aspects is your room, which you can customise to your own style. Your friends can visit. If you have any.

PSM3 Verdict

***Phantasy Star Universe* contains...**

Drab dungeon-crawling | Dull single-player mode | A masterfully bad theme song

Overall A massive waste of an opportunity for Sega to bring us an MMORPG worth shelling out for. Bah.

50

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Lucas Arts
Price £30 | **Release** Out Now
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
Lethal Alliance will be reviewed next month
PSP/Reviews

Block and roll You can use Zeeo as a shield to deflect enemies' blaster shots back into them.

Star Wars: Lethal Alliance

The story of one woman and her droid is a disappointing alliance

KNOW IT NOW

Cameos from Star Wars characters?	☑
Stab a Stormtrooper with a knife?	☑
Blaster battles galore?	☑
Coherent plot to link Episodes III and IV?	☒

We thought we'd be deep in the ground before we played a Star Wars adventure that threw up an even more loathsome character than Jar Jar Binks, but this latest venture into a galaxy far, far away has done just that. This new hired-hand of the Rebel Alliance, Rianna Saren, is a vacuous bint. She looks ridiculous with her double skin-dreadlocks, her dialogue is constipated – and her haemorr-droid, Zeeo, is equally laughable. Worse, Rianna has such a corrosive personality that you never really feel for her. You curse her every move as she clumsily falls to her death while climbing or sky-surfing and even the way she condescendingly rubs the little bot when he's done something well makes your skin crawl. Why is most Star Wars gaming made up of this drivel?

Sith off

Star Wars: Lethal Alliance is set between episodes III (The Revenge of the Sith) and IV (A New Hope, and the start of the real Star Wars films) though you'd have to be an absolute connoisseur of the films to notice this. It features a few cameos from famous faces, such as Princess Leia, Boba Fett and of course the heavy-breathing overlord, Darth Vader and your task is to uncover plans about the Death Star which should be fun, right? Wrong. Sadly, this third-person adventure is so buggy, repetitive and downright soulless you'll barely squeeze an ounce of fun from it let alone bother whether you accomplish your mission or not.

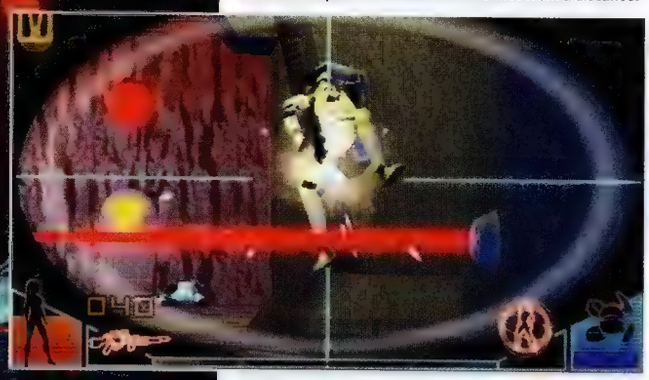
But on first glance, *Lethal Alliance* certainly looks the part, as you and your little droid combine to take on the forces of the Imperial army. You can use Zeeo as a shield to deflect blaster shots, send him in as an ad-hoc boomerang to knock over the enemy, heck you can even fly on him like a hover-board. But on further inspection, *Lethal Alliance* is more impenetrable than the Death Stars exhaust port. Dodgy camera angles, erratic targeting systems and a feeling of nauseating déjà vu make this an absolute chore to play.

In fairness, the fighting can be quite exciting on occasions, as you stealthily leap from the rafters and bang a dagger

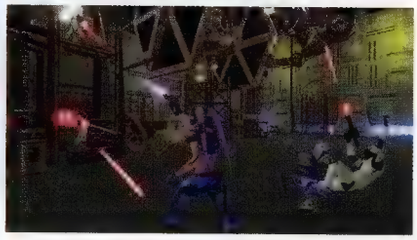
Star Wars: Lethal Alliance

"So repetitive and soulless you'll barely squeeze an ounce of fun out of it"

Cool Move
One of the best bits in Lethal Alliance is the stealth kill. If you creep up behind an foe, you can perform a brutal stabbing move where you pull their head back and pierce their neck like a thick sausage.



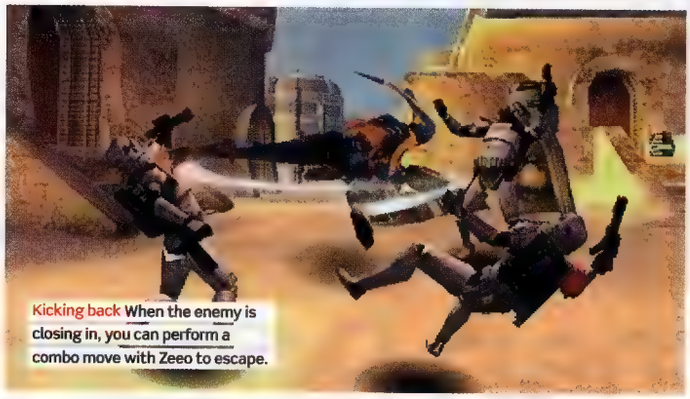
A rifling matter Part-way through the game you get to use a blaster sniper rifle to take out enemies from a distance.



down your enemy's throat, but these moments are few and far between. The majority of your time is spent desperately leaping across platforms, dodging through laser fences and clearing rooms of inept foes in equally uninspiring locations. Your solitary break from this routine is to ride Zeeo through the sky.

Sky blues

These bits are an embarrassment, though, as Rianna desperately clings to the back of her droid rather than ride it like a snowboard – it's like being dragged down an invisible bobsleigh run with zero control of your flight. Instead you have to dodge obstacles – like lava spurts and hanging girders – by pressing ← and →, but the way Rianna instantly flips to a horizontal position looks completely ridiculous and never feels responsive – you crash into almost everything anyway. The result is that just paying the game becomes absolutely maddening.



Kicking back When the enemy is closing in, you can perform a combo move with Zeeo to escape.

Ultimately, *Lethal Alliance* is too ambitious for PSP. The complex control set-up demands too much thumb dexterity and the platform sections are poorly measured, making your overall progress a frustrating stop/start affair, and with the annoying camera not always giving you the best view of the action it's hard to find reason to persist. Plus it's not always clear which way you're supposed to head in next once you've killed everyone.

Zeeo to hero
Zeeo can kick some ass. You can fly on him, use him as a shield and even send the little fella into battle for you.

Star bores

So while some blaster battles are nice and the unique way you can team-up with Zeeo to take on the enemy is fairly entertaining, *Lethal Alliance* never truly goes above and beyond the mundane and it doesn't feel as if it tries to. It doesn't help that it's all a jaggy mess of pixels which looks almost sub-PSone standard. Maybe this would have worked better on PlayStation 2 instead of the handheld, and may have offered the developers more room to manoeuvre, but this game sadly falls short of the quality we expect. Let's hope we never see this lacklustre Alliance again. We're going back to play Lego Star Wars 2 instead. Much better. **Nathan Irvine**

Walk on The on-foot bits can be fun, as you slice up enemies with your big dagger.

PSM3 Verdict

***Star Wars: Lethal Alliance* contains...**
Locations from the films | Wall climbing
Gun turrets | Stormtroopers

Overall Tedious gameplay with stitched-on flying bits? You've got yourself another drab Star Wars adventure. Rubbish.

47

PS2

Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Price £30 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
We'll be reviewing *Superman Returns* next month
PS2/Reviews

Bigger is better Some of the enemies are satisfyingly supersized. The bigger they come, and so forth.

Mile high Flying around Metropolis is by far the best part of the game, although even then it's not that exciting.

You got the power Your super powers are cool enough, so why does everything feel *ordinary*?

Superman Returns

OK, it's not that super, but *Man Returns* would sound a bit dull

Superman games have always been – to put it bluntly – absolute balls. The man in the red cape has never really had the game to match his iconic status – surprising really, given such a rich source material. But at first glance, this new game has got a winning formula: an open city to explore, fiendish villains and super powers to level up – where could it go wrong? Well, the more you play *Superman Returns*, the more you notice that while it *appears* to have all the above things... it doesn't.

It quickly becomes apparent that the open city is not actually an open city at all. You may recall *Spider-Man 2*'s missions being scattered throughout the land, and you could embark on the story if you wanted to, or go off and do other things instead. It was up to you. Not so here – if you choose to ignore the cries for help and fly around the city (far and away the coolest thing about the game), you'll croak after about five minutes. The reason for this is because Superman can't die, but – apparently – the city *can*, meaning Supes' has to protect it at all times from every threat, making for an extremely linear point-to-point experience. It also sets up the game for some of the most ridiculous boss fights ever. The second level (a gladiator arena set in deep space anyone?) is obscenely difficult, with a boss tougher than solving a hedge maze at midnight while wearing sunglasses. Chuck in a fiddly control system as well, and you'll find yourself throwing the controller at the wall. With superhuman force, of course.

Is it a turd? No, it's just 'plain'

To make matters worse, there are no side missions or collectibles, meaning there's no point in even trying to explore and that you have nothing to do until the forced Story mode decides to kick in, the buildings are just faceless blocks of 'grey', and Metropolis in general has the look of a 70's multi-storey. It is fun to fly about the city, and fighting disasters like meteor storms and skyscraper fires is a good laugh – but even they tend to get boring after the 63,000th time. As for the super powers, they're not very exciting either – there's heat vision (to melt things), super breath (to freeze enemies), super strength, super speed and a few others, but they have all the 'feel' of a water pistol and pop gun.

It's all just a bit half-arsed and a fundamentally flaccid experience. Superman really does deserve better and, more importantly, so do we. **Martin Saint**

Snap! **One nice touch is people taking photos of you as you fly above them. Cheese!**

PSM3 Verdict

***Superman Returns* contains...**
Total linearity | Drab environments | Metallo
Super powers | Less than super gameplay

Overall Superman may have returned, but on this evidence he can bugger off again. Disappointing.

55

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ON THE DISC
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IMPORT

Ridge Racer 7

She gets older, but she's still the love of your life

KNOW IT NOW

- Brand new online racing modes? ☑
- New tracks and old classics too? ☑
- 1080p res at 60 frames per second? ☑
- Incredible new game modes and handling? ☒

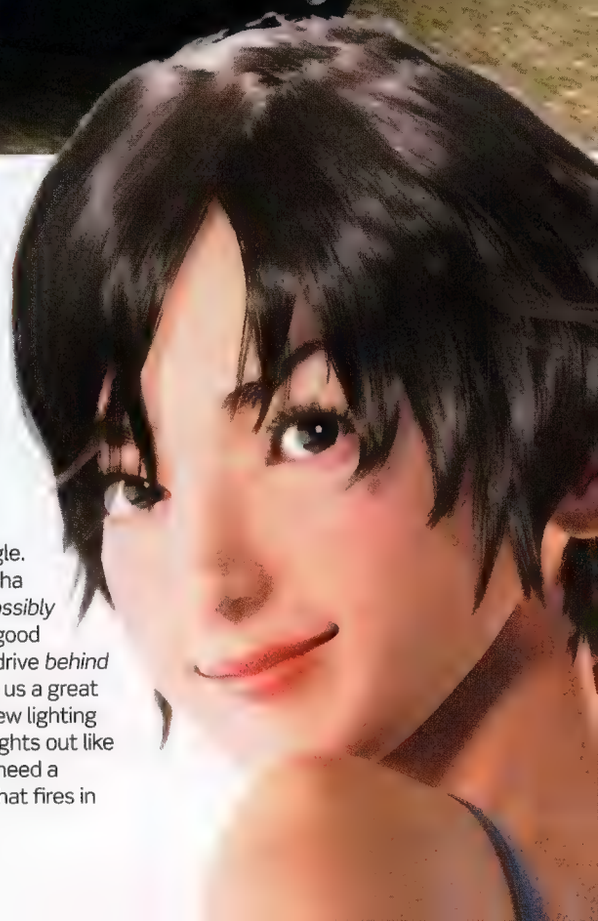
Now we're going to go out on a limb here and say something rash about how *Ridge Racer* is the ultimate videogame. About how, if videogames are about attempting the impossible, then *Ridge Racer* is the ultimate example of the art. And it's danced the fine line between idiotic and realistic for 12 long years. If you're creating any game on any format then *Ridge Racer 7* is a lesson in just how to do it.

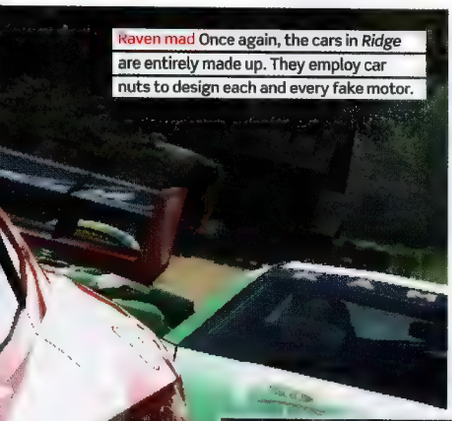
It works like this. First of all you do the real bits: You make sun and sky and beach and mountain. You design raceways of tracks the right width with the right amount of straights and curves. You create an algorithm for making metal shiny. And you're halfway there already.

Now comes the videogame magic. How fast can a real car go? Ditch that, we need them to go faster. Turning a corner at that speed would be impossible? Not to worry we'll flip the back end out and skid round. Impossible to control? Ah, just have it twang back in a straight line again if you totally let go of the stick.

Recipe for success

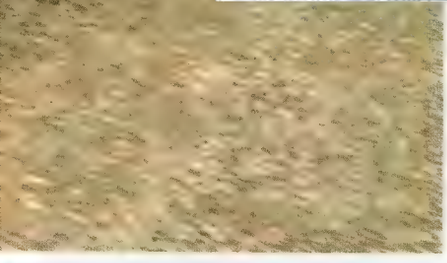
And that track through the jungle. How about a few massive Buddha statues on there. Real big. *Impossibly* big. A waterfall? Yeah, that's a good idea. But how about if you can drive *behind* the waterfall? Yeah! That'll give us a great excuse to use our impossible new lighting engine that'll snake the brake lights out like red cosmic streamers. And we need a turbo... No, a *nitrous*. And one that fires in





Raven mad Once again, the cars in *Ridge* are entirely made up. They employ car nuts to design each and every fake motor.

Fuzzy duck Look out. We've got a nitrous on the go – the exhaust glows and the screen edges go all distorted.



Create yourself a monster

You can spend hours tweaking your decals (aka drawing 'male parts' on your bonnet) but you're better off using points to accrue boosts to your engine and nitrous power.

three distinct stages. We can put stage one on the ◻ button, stage two on the ○ button and the third stage? Er... Let's jam both buttons down together. So, that's that sorted. Any more questions? No, thought not.

Just as *Metal Gear* has its grumpy soldier-back-for-one-last-job, so *Ridge Racer* has its ultra-realistic world (but not *too* realistic, mind) populated by made up cars that can literally do the impossible and make you feel like 'the man' in the process. Have you seen Vanilla Sky? *Ridge Racer* is just like motoring around Tom Cruise's perpetually perfect lucid dream. That said, if he drove off a bridge in *Ridge* he'd probably earn a nitrous boost and a "Grrrrreat Drivin'!" from the commentator...

So we've got a rigid set of rules in place. A way of doing things that – apart from the addition of the nitrous system in PSP's *Ridge Racer* in 2004, hasn't changed in 12 years. Sure the music has got a little less 'Banzai Bob Goes Rave Crazy With A Stylophone' but very little else has altered. Which, when it comes to showing off an amazing new ultra-powerful games console, puts PS3 and *Ridge Racer* in a bit of a pickle.

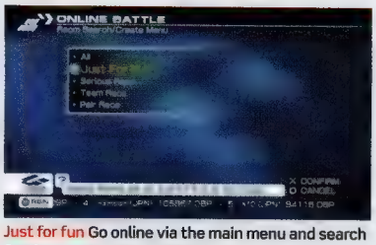
Power extreme

The extra screen resolution allows you everything to be sooooo much sharper than before. In fact *Ridge Racer 7* is one of PS3's 1080p games, running at the maximum resolution that PS3 and a top-notch £2000 Full HD TVs can do – a resolution they said would be impossible to create a game in. Well here it is – and at 60 frames per second too. But beyond the sharpness, the confines of the *Ridge* world – where everything *has to* look plastic and handle like a videogame – prevents PS3

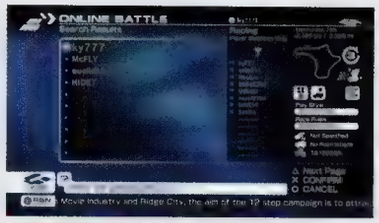
Online

Can't you get a room?

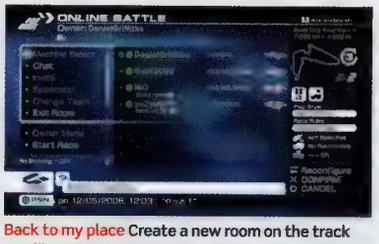
Ridge 7 online explained



Just for fun Go online via the main menu and search for the event you're looking for. Races are categorised by the different types of cars, whether you're a pro going for vital points or 'Just For Fun'.

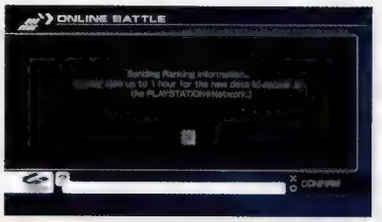


Rooms to view You'll then see a list of rooms of your chosen type. These are games currently being hosted by fellow players. Join a room you like the look of or choose to start your own.



Back to my place Create a new room on the track you like, with the cars you want (or just leave it open to all comers). You can even invite your mates to join you online by sending a PS3 Friend message.

Thrashing bore Beware. While hosting your own room and inviting anyone may sound friendly, you'll get soundly thrashed if you allow in expert players with heavily customised cars. Cheats!



Final score The results from every race, be it online or single-player, are fired back at the *Ridge* central server. It only takes a couple of seconds to send and you're soon on the tables alongside the pros.

Bread and Buddha The trackside scenery of *Ridge 7* won't disappoint fans of the series. We love *Ridge* world. Soon as they make it for real, we're there. Trust us.

Stream machine The closer you get to the car in front, the less you have to accelerate and the more speed you have in reserve.

from pulling 90% of its favourite tricks. There's no snappy focus effects. No realtime deformation of textures (i.e. dents in the cars), no particle physics beyond the odd spark and nitrous effect (no smashing scenery into a million physics imbued shards) and certainly no on-foot sections, alternate routes, AI-driven team mates or multi-stage upgradeable rocket launchers.

Beaming from ear to ear

Even the ability to place genuine reflections of the genuinely passing scenery on the cars and the dynamic lighting (which gives a superb 'bleach out' when you face the sun) don't seem particularly impressive because they were so good at faking it in the previous games.

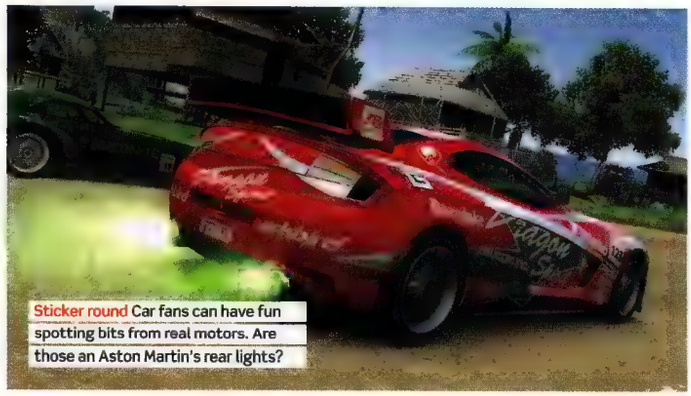
So what we're limited to is an extra-shiny *Ridge Racer*. Extra sharp. Extra... shiny. And um... That's it. There are more tracks than you possibly could need (including the now customary revisits of many classics from throughout the series), including tracks from the 360-only *Ridge Racer 6* – which gives us an interesting opportunity to compare the two games side by side (and, in theory, finally settle the 'which console is the best' debate once and for all). And the answer? What do you reckon, based on the following evidence? 360 *Ridge* looks more gritty. There seems to be more detail in certain textures. Take out the green mirrored car in the foreground, narrow your eyes and it could (*could*) be real. Or at least a Star Wars-like plastic interpretation of what passes for real. PS3, on the other hand, has a hi-def sheen on everything. It all seems smoother. Edges are softer, colours more muted and it lacks the visual bite of the 360 game. If anything, though, it looks better. More fakily hyper-real. More like the ultimate polished videogame and

Stream machine The new slipstream meter is a cool touch. Drive behind the car in front and you get 'sucked along'. Choose your moment, then dart out for victory.

ATE GRAND PRIX
Country mile Not just a city, but a whole country to explore and dominate. Work your way across the map, winning championships at each event 'node'.
CONFIRM
NEWS ■ UFRA sponsored a dinner party at the Rave City Hotel for the world's

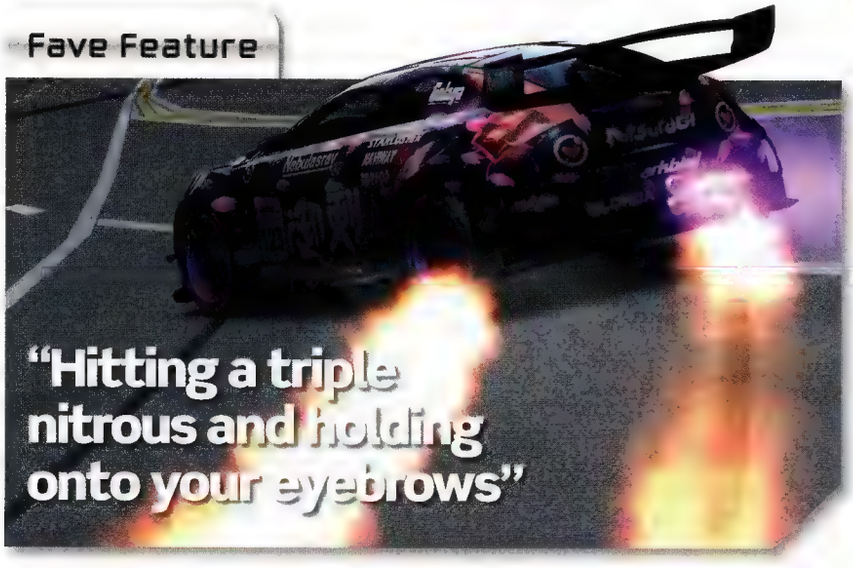
we admire it for that. They could have gone for *Gran Turismo*, but, as discussed earlier, *Ridge*'s creators are now in a whole other place altogether.

And the polish extends beyond the tracks and onto the menu screens. *Ridge 7* gives the best impersonation of '*Ridge* World' yet – in no small part helped by the net connection that streams real race results and comments along the bottom of the screen. Yes, *Ridge* is online and loving it. Connection is effortless and it's easy to find yourself racing against a genuine Japanese pro (and choking on their dust). And when you're not racing, you'll waste hours studying other racers' stat points (you earn in-game currency for race results) and dialling through the multitude of options to find your ranking and your name (probably somewhere in the lower regions of the multiple tables.)


Sticker round Car fans can have fun spotting bits from real motors. Are those an Aston Martin's rear lights?

It's the ultimate *Ridge* – glowing with PS3 power and delivering exactly what you want. If you want it. **Daniel Griffiths**

Fave Feature



PSM3 Verdict

***Ridge Racer 7* contains...**
60fps 1080p racing | Online racing
Lasting tournament challenge | Speed

Overall Impossible to fault, but the feeling of deja vu puts a downer on PlayStation 3's power.

80

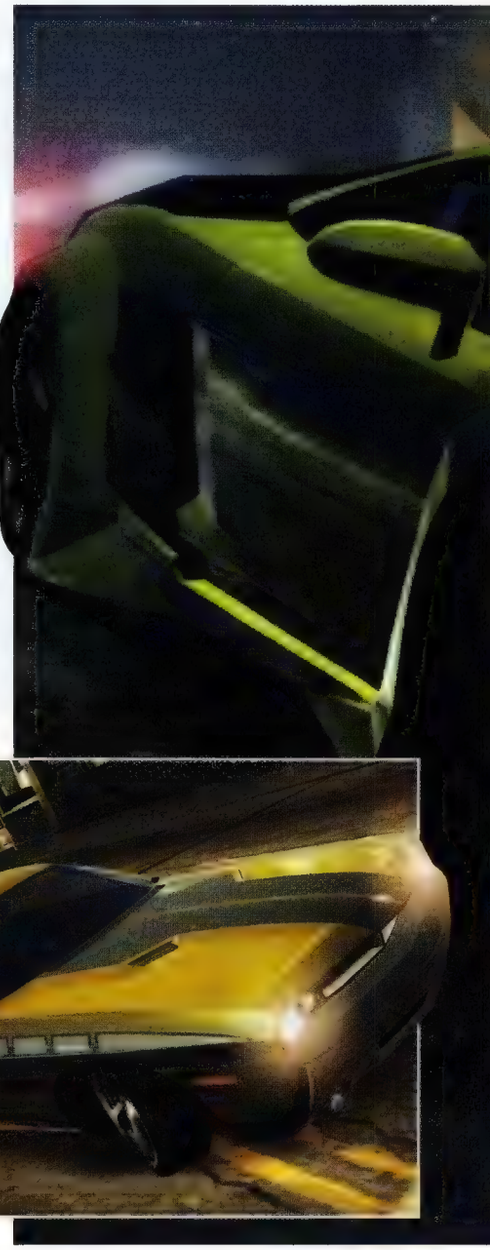
Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Price $59 | **Release** Out now (import)
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
See *Carbon* on the disc next month
PS3/ Latest

Need For Speed: Carbon

IMPORT

But isn't PS3 supposed to make games *better*?



KNOW IT NOW

- The same *Carbon* game you love? ☑
- Cars you wish you could own? ☑
- Take the game online for multi-player fun? ☑
- Tilt-controlled steering? ☒

Pwn the NFS city

The structure is virtually identical to the PS2 version, but you now prove your supremacy in a multi-car race after each territory takeover.

By now you've probably glanced at the summary box and seen that score. How could a next-gen version of a game we gave 83% to a few months ago so much worse than on PS2? Surely it's just the same game but better? Well, yes it is the same game and yes, there are improvements... it's just a question of expectations, you see.

PS3 is the world's most powerful games console. Without question. So why is it displaying graphics like *this*? There are jaggies *everywhere*, especially around the edges of the cars and their alloy wheels, and the contrast seems to have been ramped up so high that the game scrapes against your retinas like fingernails down a blackboard. We've been wowed by *MotorStorm* for weeks, so we know what PS3 is capable of – and it's more than this.

Unforgivably, not only does it look worse than the Xbox 360 version (which we hate to say, but can understand considering the extra time EA has had with that machine), but PS3 *Carbon* actually looks more like PS2 version than 360's. And, if anything, the PS2 game is faster and easier on the eye – something we never should be saying in a PS3 review.

Race for the prize

But, graphics aside, this is still a decent game. The races tend to be more exciting than those of other recent *NFS* games, police involvement is seamlessly integrated into races and the tracks are now much more fun to drive around. The new picture-in-picture reactions from wingmen and bosses are excellent and really add impetus to win. Meanwhile, seeing your rival smirk when you hit a wall or bus stop will make you want to catch up and wipe that grin from his face. Plus the post-race conversations are now fully 3D, with animated drivers who actually look like the men in the cut-scenes. All good.

However, your wingmen still slam on the brakes when you approach them from behind, and now the game freezes after every race to ask you whether you want to overwrite your save. Take a guess. You then have to wait while it fills the bar, whereas PS2 does it automatically in the background. But there are loads of cars on race grids now and there are civilian motors to dodge during races too, although they're few and far between.

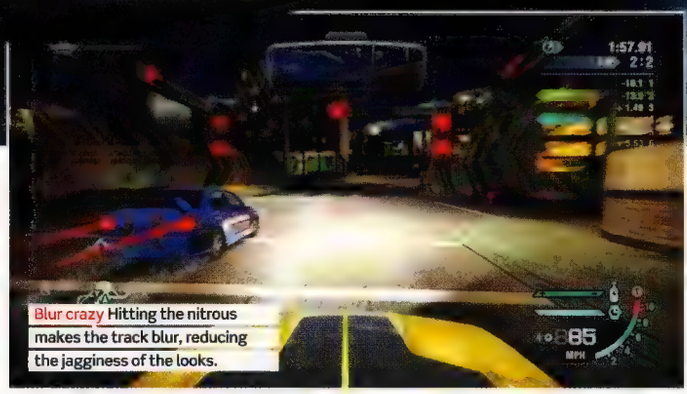
Sparks will fly Incidental effects are OK, but don't stand up to scrutiny. Keep your speed up.

The problem we may be going to get for the next year or so with cross-generation multi-format releases is games coded with the lowest common denominator in mind – that'll be PS2. This, we fear, will prove to be just the first of many. So although the cars have been given a brilliant coat of next-gen sheen and actually look like real cars – as opposed to 360's toy-like vehicles – the city itself is blocky and wafer-thin. Sure, there are pseudo-reflective office blocks now and you can read every word on the café menu boards thanks to the higher resolution, but other windows have reflections painted flatly onto them and stone pillars in posh garden walls are actually flat *pictures* of columns. And the less said about the scrolling ribbons of 'water' in the fountains, the better.

Granted, you won't notice all of these things while driving along at 130mph, but when you crash into a wall and see PS2's polygon count staring you in the face, you'll feel wonder why you bothered buying this and PS3. The gameplay still shines as you progress through the races, but we can't recommend this as any way to show off your PS3. If you're holding off getting the PS2 version of Carbon, in order to get the PS3 game in March, forget it – you'll get just as much fun from the PS2 game, play it tomorrow and save £20 into the bargain.

Here's hoping next year's PlayStation 3 *Need for Speed* isn't so much of a cut-'n'-shunt half-arsed hybrid. **Justin Towell**

Tasty rides The cars are definitely the stars here, with real reflections running like syrup over gleaming next-gen bodywork. At least they got that right.



Blur crazy Hitting the nitrous makes the track blur, reducing the jagginess of the looks.

Not quite right It doesn't seem too bad in these screens, but the game just doesn't look the part.

PSM3 Verdict

***Need For Speed: Carbon* contains...**
Jagged graphics | Beautiful cars
Flat scenery | Stupid wingmen

Overall Get the decent PS2 version instead and save your money for a real next-gen racer.

58

Pub Sony | **Dev** Game Republic
Price £50 | **Release** Out now (US/Jap)
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
We'll review *Days Of The Blade* on the DVD next month
PS3/Reviews

Benkai on the prize Benkai's the slow, powerful one. To tell the truth, you'll only ever use him and Yoshitsune. The other two characters are a bit pork.

IMPORT

Genji: Days Of The Blade

Genji gets its next-gen looks, but the gameplay is still playing catch up

KNOW IT NOW

The most famous crab in the world? ☑
A really ineffective camera? ☑
Sword-slashery-by-numbers? ☑
That 'next generation' feeling? ☒

Damning first sentence time: if the first PS3 game you play is *Genji*, you'll wonder what the fuss about the next generation is actually for. Unfortunately, all the pretty shimmery graphics in the world can't disguise that *Days Of The Blade* offers little that you haven't seen done before in several older, better games. *Onimusha 3*, for instance.

It's basically a standard slash-'em-up. It looks absolutely lovely, there's no doubt about that, rammed with astounding-looking characters, beautiful environments – like the full-scale battlefield or the burning building, which we swear made us feel on the warm side while we were there – and wonderful game engine cut-scenes, some of which look so good you'll have to pinch your eyes to believe it. And that really hurts. But while it's certainly got next generation looks, the sequel to *Genji* feels like a last generation game.

Lots of character

Like the previous outing, *Days Of The Blade* sees you in control of Yoshitsune (the one with the swords) and Benkai (the one with the club), joined here by Buson (the one with the big stick) and Shizuka (the one with the breasts). You're swamped with enemies to slice and dice, and can switch characters with the D-pad. Smash enough enemies to bits and you'll fill your Kamui meter which means that, with a click of L1, your enemies will freeze and you'll enter a button-tapping game, which allows you to take out hordes of baddies without breaking sweat. This bit looks especially gorgeous, by the way, transplanting the action into a shimmering magical plain for just a moment, although the impact soon becomes diluted when you realise you'll be seeing it every five minutes.

But the combat is underdeveloped. Sure, you *can* indulge in all sorts of exciting-looking combos, but why bother when simply hammering at △ or □ will down enemies efficiently enough and ramp up your Kamui gauge quicker than blinking? And another problem is that although you're often surrounded by enemies, it's

Genji: Days Of The Blade

"It's got next generation looks, but it feels like a last generation game"

Combo harvester While there are loads of combos to use, button bashing has the same effect.

rare to see more than two or three attack at once – the others seem content to sit and wait their turn. Sounds a bit easy? Not really, because *Days Of The Blade* usually resorts to the cheap tactic of having archers sit at the back of crowds and take potshots at you, so although you're never scrapping with many foes at once, you'll take massive damage.

Then there's the camera. You can't move it. Sit back and think about that for a moment. You're jumping and diving all over the place (you can roll with the right stick), while enemies sprint about in all directions... *and you can't change the viewpoint*. This results, far too often, in your character facing the screen, flailing wildly – and ineffectually – at baddies lurking somewhere behind the camera. And because you inevitably can't see enough of your surroundings, you end up spending far too much time staring at the small grey radar at the top right to find out where the hell the baddies are actually standing. Welcome to the next generation.

Sixaxis of evil **Want some tilty-pad action? You can use it instead of the right stick to dodge, but it's just awkward. You'll try it once and never again.**

Blunted blade

Still, although we've moaned a lot, there is a decent amount of fun to be had from *Days Of The Blade*. It's slick and it's fast, and when the fighting flows you can *almost* forget about the flaws. But really, it's just another game where you run from one area to another, clearing room after room of enemies and, graphics apart, it never truly surprises or impresses. And while *Genji* isn't rubbish by any means, it's not that good either. And that's not what you're getting a PS3 for, is it? **David Cook**

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict

***Genji: Days Of The Blade* contains...**
Next-gen graphics | Last-gen gameplay
No camera control | Nothing new

Overall The looks aren't enough to hide a so-so game. Not bad, but not really worth your time.

60

Pub Midway | **Dev** Midway
Price £30 | **Release** Out Now
Multi-player 1-2 Wi-Fi

ON THE DISC
See *Unchained* on the disc next month

Mortal Kombat: Unchained

Finish him! Or yourself! Oh, just finish *someone*...

Note to developers: if you're going to make a game where the best bit is tearing off your opponent's arm and using it like a soggy cricket bat, you might as well make it easy to do. The last *Kombat* on PS2 – *Armageddon* – did this right: just twitching the stick during the 'Finish Him' window made Sub-Zero start ripping chunks out of Scorpion, and throwing in a couple of button taps was enough to de-limb opponents like a toddler with a stick insect. But because this is, technically, just an updated version of the earlier *Mortal Kombat: Deception*, here you're back to memorising the one or two finishers available to each character. Pity, because the suicidal hara-kiri moves make their return too, and these seem perfect for the create-a-fatality treatment – just imagine yanking your own legs off as your dazed opponent looks on. *Imagine.*

A karnival of kombat

Other changes include the kharac – sorry, *character* line-up. Though it still isn't as comprehensive as *Armageddon*'s, *Unchained* adds six fighters to the *Deception* roster, including super-sized bosses Shao Kahn and Goro, bringing the total fighter count to 30. Konquest mode has been fixed – slightly – so that certain missions are lengthier and make more sense, although the effect's totally scuppered by the lack of a right analogue stick and dodgy camera control. Fighting is slightly more complex than in *Armageddon* – there's no air kombat, but the return of a third fighting 'style' makes kombo strings trickier and overcomplicates things slightly. It's still a poor relation, mind you, to the perfectly-balanced likes of *Tekken: Dark Resurrection* – this is MTV fighting, all about flashy specials and easy blocking.

And then there are the extra bits. Endurance mode is sort of tedious – *Kombat* doesn't really lend itself to conserving energy in the same way as, say, *Street Fighter* – so you'll have trouble racking up more than five kills in a row. There's no sign of *Armageddon*'s karting – Midway aren't *that* sadistic – but Puzzle Kombat and Chess make their return. Chess is still a bit stupid – it's sort of the same rules as the real thing, except that when pieces 'capture' each other they actually fight instead, so it basically comes down to how good you are at hitting each other rather than your strategic nous. Puzzle combat, though, makes much more sense on the smaller screen, and actually ended up being the thing we played most. True, it's essentially a direct rip-off of ultra-cute Ryu-based block-'em-up *Puzzle Fighter*, but that one doesn't let the your characters rip each other to shreds – and after all, that's what *Mortal Kombat* has always been all about. Next time, Midway, just make it a bit easier, eh? **Joel Snape**

Crispy Blaze has been relegated to bonus villain, rather than the all-powerful fried-despot he plays in *Armageddon*.

Look who's squawking Zombie Kang still annoys us with his ridiculous Bruce Lee impersonations.

PSM3 Verdict

***Mortal Kombat: Unchained* contains...**
Two fatalities per character | Zombie Liu Kang Kitana | Jax | Chess | Puzzle Kombat

Overall Trimmed down, but still excellent – the gameplay experience is intact, even if the character roster isn't.

77

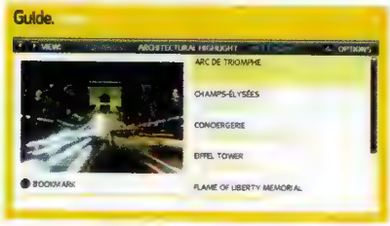
Killer Queens Less cerebral punishment, more thumb blisters – that's Kombat Chess for you.

Chill behaviour Frost returns – we've got no idea why she wasn't in *Mortal Kombat Deception*, but it's good to see her back and murderising.

Sony | PSP | Out now

Passport To Paris

For frequent travellers only



Passport To Paris is one of those things trying to turn the PSP into a multimedia machine. It's an interactive guidebook that aims to make your stay in a foreign city that much easier. Providing that city is Paris, that is, and not Beijing or somewhere.

Divided into sections, it includes everything from maps, pictures and video to basic phrases. The layout is pleasing to the eye and all the information is easily accessible at the touch of a button. There is also the ability to create your own tour of the city and set up an itinerary unique to your own interests. *Passport To Paris* also allows you to download information on the city and its attractions as submitted by other visitors, meaning you'll always find something new.

Mind you, it isn't much use unless you're going to Paris, but there's loads of info and even regular visitors will find new things to see and places to shop. So if you're going to the city on the Seine, get this. If not, don't. **Lesley Smith**

50

Vivendi | PS2 | Out Now

Eragon

Simple slashing for simple people

Got a film license that you can't feasibly turn into a cutesy children's platformer? Turn it into a generic slasher instead. Simple, really. And that's what they've done with *Eragon*. You fight off various bad guys with your sword, employing a simple system of combo moves which revolve around ⊗ and ◎ buttons. You'll have seen all the moves before, but they're still quite satisfying to pull off. Saphira can be summoned to help out during some of the major battles, but the main focus of play remains pretty much squarely on young Eragon.

Unfortunately, you can't control the camera at all – the perspective remains ever fixed directly behind Eragon, which is irritating and a waste of the right stick. It looks lovely, though – the cut-scenes are especially well done and it's obvious that the developers have put in a lot of work into them. That said, though, there's nothing particularly special or exciting in this game. It's a decent enough slasher, but really it's only for absolute die-hard fans of the movie or the books. Anyone else can probably ignore it without missing a great deal. **David Cook**

70

THQ | PSP | Out now

Scooby Doo! Who's Watching Who?

We're watching, but we don't care much

Zoinks, and so on. Playing as everyone's favourite canine, Scooby Doo, you battle the usual selection of spooks possessing a hotel. Why is it always hotels (or fairs) in Scooby Doo? Why not a space cruiser or something?

Anyway, Scooby gets a nice set of moves, including his own version of a spin attack, but the game relies on collecting dog tags to access new areas and eating Scooby snacks to defeat restless ghosts. And for the first time, you get to drive the Mystery Machine.

Who's Watching Who works surprisingly well, with detailed levels and good voice-acting, with members of the cast reprising their roles from the show. Flanked by a suitably eerie soundtrack, this is ideal for younger players. It's not really for us or you, however. **Lesley Smith**

59

Atari | PS2 | Out now

Saint Seiya: The Hades

Seiya later, alligator

Mixing 2D anime with 3D fights, *Saint Seiya: The Hades* is based on one of the most enduring anime series ever to come out of Japan. The game itself has a bit of an identity crisis, though – half of it's like a Choose Your Own Adventure book, where you scrolls through reams of text before pressing a button to pick a response. The rest of the time, it's a stylish beat-'em-up with great combos and flashy animations that look as good – but aren't – as *Tekken* or *Virtua Fighter*.

The mix of obscure references to Greek mythology, gorgeous animation and original Japanese voiceovers (with subtitles for those gamers not fluent in Nihongo) makes this a decent game, but you'll need to get your reading glasses ready before you play. **Andy Kelly**

62

THQ | PS2 | Out Now

The Sopranos: Road To Respect

We can't respect a game like this

Gangster games are big money this year. It started with *The Godfather* and now The Sopranos has joined in on the act. The game is, obviously, based on the 'hit TV series', but while many of the locations are recreated digitally you don't actually get to see many of the characters. Like *The Godfather* before it, *The Sopranos* has you playing as an up-and-coming mobster who didn't appear in the original work. In this case it's Joey LaRocca, the illegitimate child of 'Big Pussy' Bonpensiero.

Bottom of the ladder

Unfortunately, for those beginning to see similarities between this game and The Godfather, it doesn't end there. Tony Soprano lets you work for him out of guilt and you start as the lowest of the low doing odd jobs. After a while a little more responsibility is thrown your way but most of the time is spent engaging in fisticuffs with enemies – and said scrapping is pretty basic, and never particularly gripping. Added to that, respect and money also matter, which is where the fighting becomes really important – but it feels like every single character in this game wants to batter you. Lowlife scum is understandable, but when smartly-dressed business types approach you on the street to offer you a shoeing, it gets surreal.

The Sopranos should have been a good game with an all-star cast, great graphics and a cut-throat plot. The TV show remains popular and this title should have capitalised on it. However, *Road To Respect* feels as illegitimate as the main character, as if the show's creators didn't want it made into a video game. Put simply it feels like a clone of *The Godfather* but nowhere near on the same level in terms of depth and enjoyment. If you must play a gangster game this year, then don't bother with this – just go and buy *The Godfather*. Simple. **Lesley Smith**

PSM3 Verdict

Stick to watching the series on DVD. It's loads better.

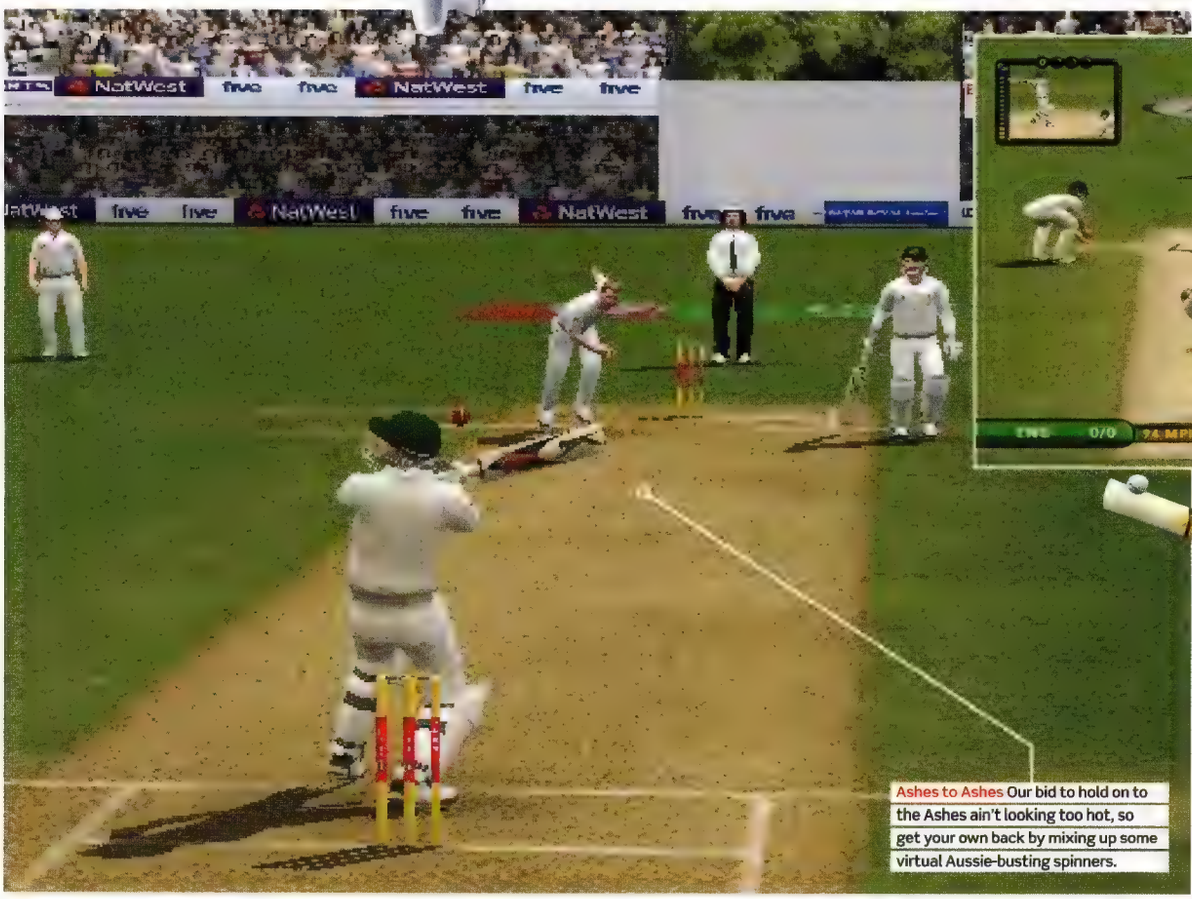
40

Crime doesn't pay *The Sopranos* doesn't exactly make stellar use of its license, really.

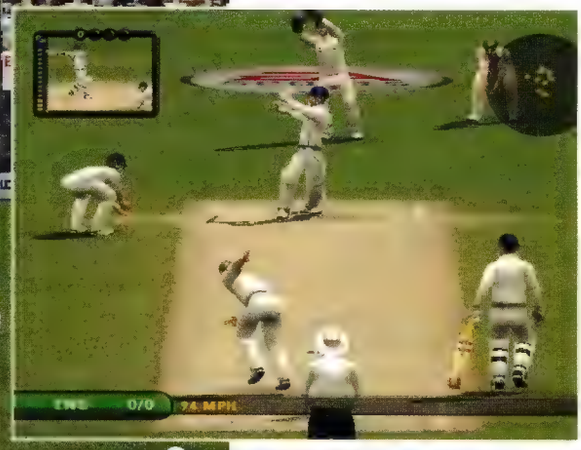
PS2

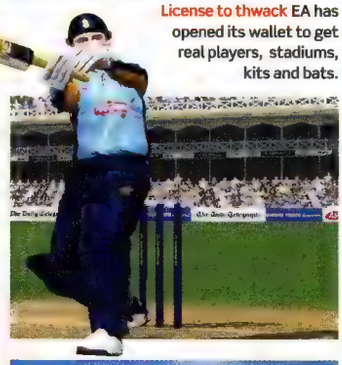
Pub EA | **Dev** EA Canada
Price £30 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
We'll have *EA Cricket* on the disc next month



Ashes to Ashes Our bid to hold on to the Ashes ain't looking too hot, so get your own back by mixing up some virtual Aussie-busting spinners.





License to thwack EA has opened its wallet to get real players, stadiums, kits and bats.

EA Cricket 2007

We don't like crick... oh, we do this joke every year

You wouldn't think cricket games made by Canadians would really work. It sounds a bit like hip hop made in the Shetlands or Buddhist Monks making tanks. But, thanks to EA Canada's new 'Century Stick Control', this is a superior version of our second sport. OK, it's a hideous marketing moniker, but EA's latest gimmick of moving the batting control to the right analogue stick achieves what the swing-stick did for *Tiger Woods* and what Total Punch Control has done for *Fight Night* – and it makes you wonder why it hasn't been done before. It feels right, giving you more precise control over your shots than ever before and making a more natural cricket experience.

By mapping the shot buttons to the right analogue stick, you're able to smash balls through the covers, hit quick singles and use the pace of a fast bowler to edge the ball down to the boundary. It's not perfect, since you'll have to really nail the timing to truly pick a spot outside the default eight directions, but it's a massive step in the right direction. Hit R1 and you can add height to the shot, while holding down R1 will see you dance down the wicket. Smashing Warney out the ground has never been more satisfying, especially once you're playing at 'real man' level on three stars and above.

Leading the field

But the problem with cricket games has always been trying to make the fielding and bowling any good at all. With the former, it's like they've more or less chucked the towel in – pretty much everything's handled for you, and there are some very dodgy animations and more or less useless AI, which spoils the realism.

Win the Ashes
Replay The Ashes 2005 with a series of challenges to unlock actual footage of us shoving it in the Ozzies faces. Eat that, 'cobber'.

The bowling is better, but limited. Consistently hit good length and line and you'll be able to select different pitches – like bouncers – to mix up your attack. However in single-player mode – without the sledging you can give to your mate in a multi-player game – it becomes as much a test of your skill as your patience. Yes, it's satisfying when you take wickets, but it can also be dull and leave you heading for the auto-play function. In a way, it feels like you're getting half a game. But it's a deep, absorbing half that'll let you right the inevitable wrongs of this Ashes tour. And that's *got* to appeal. **Pete Webber**

PSM3 Verdict

***EA Cricket 2007* contains...**
Brilliant new batting | Tons of licenses
Loads of game modes | The whitest whites

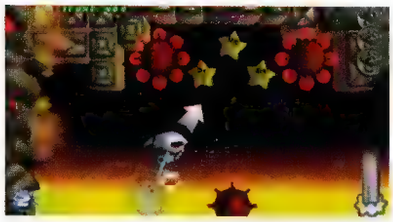
Overall The new batting system doesn't quite hide some of its other flaws, but there's plenty of value here.

79

Codemasters | PSP | Out now

Bliss Island

Now this really is taking the bliss



***Bliss Island* is a** collection of shallow minigames starring some furry tropical animals (zwoophs) who, erm, make clouds. Bored of creating atmospheric gas formations (insert your own 'night after a curry' gag here), every Friday they have a day off to play games – presumably not this one. The prize? Another day off. Which would be 'bliss'. See? *Jesus.*

Anyway, no number of steel drum tunes or farting French furballs can make this game anything but an annoyance. Press ⊗ or ◎ to propel an animal or fruit in the direction you're pushing the analogue stick and avoid some nasty crustaceans and traps. The billiards minigame is almost passable, but it's the best of a bad bunch. To pad it out, it makes you do the same thing five times in a row, and then yet again later with a few more obstacles. It's very simplistic, very dull and the graphics look like a bargain bucket PC game. You can actually get a better version of *Bliss Island* for free on the net. So why buy this? **Justin Towell**

35

Atari | PS2 | Out now

Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2

Dragons? No. Balls? Why yes

Sitting through *Budokai Tenkaichi 2*'s intro movie just makes your jaw drop... and then the game begins properly. Sadly it's nowhere near as good as those two minutes. The dozens of characters are all 3D but still manage to look as if they were ripped from the pages of a manga comic, a feat which is certainly quite impressive.

When not flying from city to city, the majority of the game is spend in one-on-one fights. The environments are all beautifully depicted and their complexity makes the characters stand out even more. And while there is some button-mashing, it's not a ridiculously fast-paced fighting game, giving you time to appreciate the combo moves. The problem is that it's just too easy – simply raining down the punches leads to quick victories and, though not terribly bad, *Budokai Tenkaichi 2* just leaves you wanting so much more. **Lesley Smith**

49

Midway | PSP | Out now

LA Rush

Smash up the Hollywood sign. Yes!

This game is typical Midway fare – arcade immediacy mixed with OTT vehicles and ludicrous speed. All of which is good, of course. The city is massive and split into unlockable districts, all tied together by impressively acted – yet unintentionally funny – pre-rendered cut-scenes. *LA Rush* tries so hard to be 'street' that it just runs into cliché territory, with everyone dissing and holla-ing at each other and pimping their rides to the max. Still, it's a fun game and the graphics are far from – ahem – wack, with impressive detail (especially the funfair on the pier), destructible scenery and progressive vehicle damage, all in solid, smooth 3D. In true *Rush* fashion there's also a Stunt mode with tokens to find, but that's only fun for five minutes before the gameplay and music repeat. So while big, bright and bootylicious, *Rush* is nothing to holla home about. **Justin Towell**

74

Sega | PS2 | January 12

World Snooker Championship 2007

It'll 'baize' a smile among cue fans. (Gnngh)

With John Virgo's delivery, that twangy music and all the major players, it's hard to fault the production values of *WSC2007*. There are no disembodied hands here – you get 3D players and all the 'camera in pocket' replays you could ask for. There are picture-in-picture cutaways to show player and audience reaction and you can take it online too, if you can find anyone to play. However, there are a niggles, like full-power shots stopping dead in the jaws of pockets and too-difficult low-power nudges. But with a wealth of pool and billiard variations and intelligent commentary, you should 'cue' for this at the shops. Except there won't be a cue/queue, but... oh, whatever. **Daniel Griffiths**

80

Codemasters | PSP | Out now

TOCA Race Driver 3: Challenge

Racing is fun. Driving tests are not

Here's a surprise – see that '*Challenge*' bit in the title? Well, that's there to signify that this isn't the full *TOCA 3* experience. Maybe the full game was just too big to fit PSP, but whatever the reason, the series' traditional Story mode is gone and in its place are a series of challenges on five levels of difficulty. Each asks you to navigate cones, stop in designated zones and beat set times, all with gold, silver or bronze awards, before telling you to use the skills you've just learned in a short race series. You're forever waiting for the game proper to start, when actually you're playing it already.

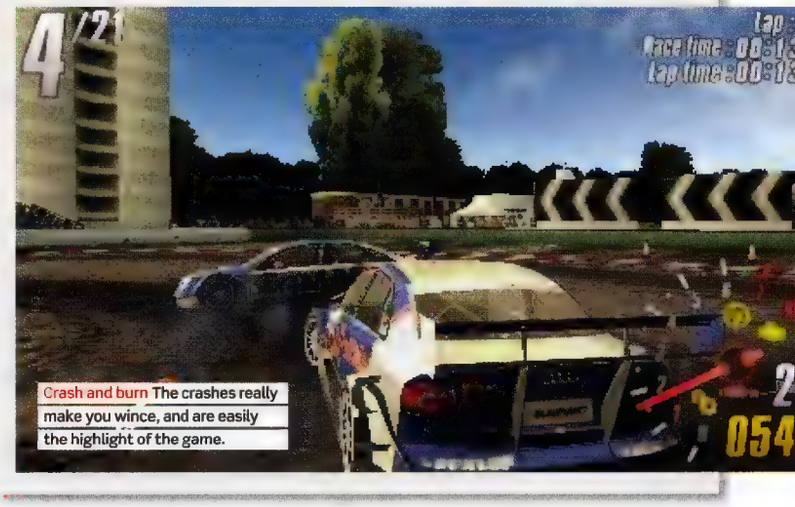
Powerful engine

It's a shame the structure is so unfulfilling as PSP actually does remarkably well in delivering the racing engine that already pushed the PS2 so hard. Some tracks – like Adelaide and Long Beach – look amazing (though others look paper-thin), while the loading times are pretty quick and the AI is more or less exemplary. Criminally, though, most cars are ridiculously grippy, which results in a series of insultingly easy races. It's a pity – the potential to be PSP's best racer is massive, yet the real meat of the game itself lies on the cutting room floor. Better luck next year, perhaps? **Justin Towell**

PSM3 Verdict

Aims for immediacy, but hits the Armco.

74



Crash and burn The crashes really make you wince, and are easily the highlight of the game.

Ride of your life If your custom coasters are too twisty, your punters will hurl everywhere.

Atari | PS2 | Out now

Thrillville

It's fair to say this theme park sim is OK

You'd think that being put in charge of a busy theme park would be an absolute headache. Admin, budgets, dealing with safety inspectors, promotion, kids puking up candy floss-coloured puddles everywhere... less a fun fair, more a fair amount of hassle. But *Thrillville*, luckily, focuses more on arsing about on rides, building rollercoasters and challenging people to arcade games than balancing the books. But at the same time, if you're a spreadsheet-obsessed dullard – and there's nothing wrong with that – there's still a lot of management and 'sim' stuff to get your teeth into.

And that's why the game works so well – you can play it *your* way. Want to blast through the missions and just enjoy yourself? You can. Want to make your park a financial powerhouse that rakes in thousands of dollars? Also possible. There's even an option on the main menu to skip past the main game entirely and just play the numerous arcade and party games on offer.

Sumo selecta

Among the best of these are Saucer Sumo (where players bounce around trying to knock each other over a steep edge), Trampoline (a bit like *Tony Hawk*'s, but, er, on a trampoline) and an *R-Type*-style shoot-'em-up. These can all be played with up to four players and its certainly an accomplished minigame collection in its own right.

But most people will play the game as intended. You go about your daily duties, mopping up sick, talking to your customers, building rides, coasters and stalls... there's loads to do and it can be a lot of fun. But because everything is so simplistic and 'family friendly', more refined gamers may thirst for something with a little more substance. Still, entertaining stuff. **Andy Kelly**

PSM3 Verdict

It's a bit simple, but the addictive minigames save it. **66**

505 Game Street | PS2 | Out now

Wild Arms 4

A wild departure for the series

Never heard of *Wild Arms*? No worries – this game is so different to previous instalments that it doesn't matter. *WA4* brings some refreshingly new ideas to RPGing and, surprisingly, it's not in the rather dull HEX battle system, a rather uninspired grid-based strategy affair which sports rather dull enemies and is far too easy to be fun. The most original things in this game come in exploring the fields and towns, where you'll get sucked into some clever puzzling as well as well-integrated platforming. There's even bullet time. We kid you not. **Kirsten Kearney** **77**

2K Sports | PS2 | Out now

NBA: 2K7

You'll be dreaming of hoops for months

Yep, more b-ball. New this year is Association mode – Management mode, in other words – which is ball-bouncingly complex. You can even organise practise time for individuals in their weak areas on their day off. In Street mode, meanwhile, you can take some time away from the courts and play some non-NBA rules games. The graphics and controls are excellent and the tournaments, situation play and new 'on the fly' coaching (where you can swap out players without stopping play) are as tight as you could hope for. A superior basketball simulation, this one. **Kirsten Kearney** **80**

THQ | PS2 | Out now

SpongeBob: Creature From The Crusty Crab

We had crusty crabs once and... never mind

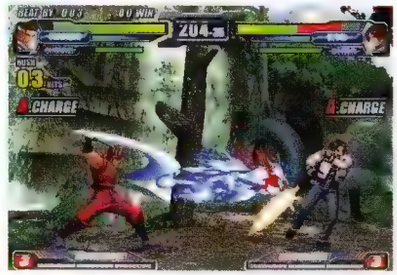
As if SpongeBob's world wasn't insane enough, this game is set in the characters' dreams. Each level explores the desires and fantasies of the ocean's denizens and sees them running from their greatest fears. What a terrible shame, then, that a game with such weird possibilities really does end up being well... typical. This really is a decidedly average platformer, with a few ho-hum racing bits thrown in. The graphics look scrappy and ugly while the levels are easy and dull. SpongeBob doesn't deserve such shoddiness. **Nathan Irvine** **49**

Atari | PS2 | Out now

Neo Geo Battle Coliseum

Like you've died and gone to SNK heaven

For those unaware, the Neo Geo was an arcade console available in the early '90s, created by SNK to power their 2D fighters. And for fans, this is a chance to play as all your favourite SNK characters in one game, from such diverse titles as *King Of Fighters*, *Fatal Fury*, *Samurai Showdown*, *King Of The Monsters*, *World Heroes* and even *Metal Slug*. Using a tag team style with two characters on each side, and with solid combo and super moves this is a far harder and ultimately more satisfying game than Capcom's *Vs* series. **Andy Kelly** **71**



PSM3 Recommends

The best games from the last few months

Final Fantasy XII
Square Enix | PS2
"An outstanding RPG. It's unmistakedly *Final Fantasy*, but it feels as fresh as any adventure on PS2. Ripples with magic and a sense of exploration. Great."
PSM3 Rating 94%

Guitar Hero 2
Red Octane | PS2
"Addresses every criticism and packs in a load of new stuff. A masterclass in sequel-making, *Guitar Hero 2* is absolutely brilliant. Go and buy it."
PSM3 Rating 92%

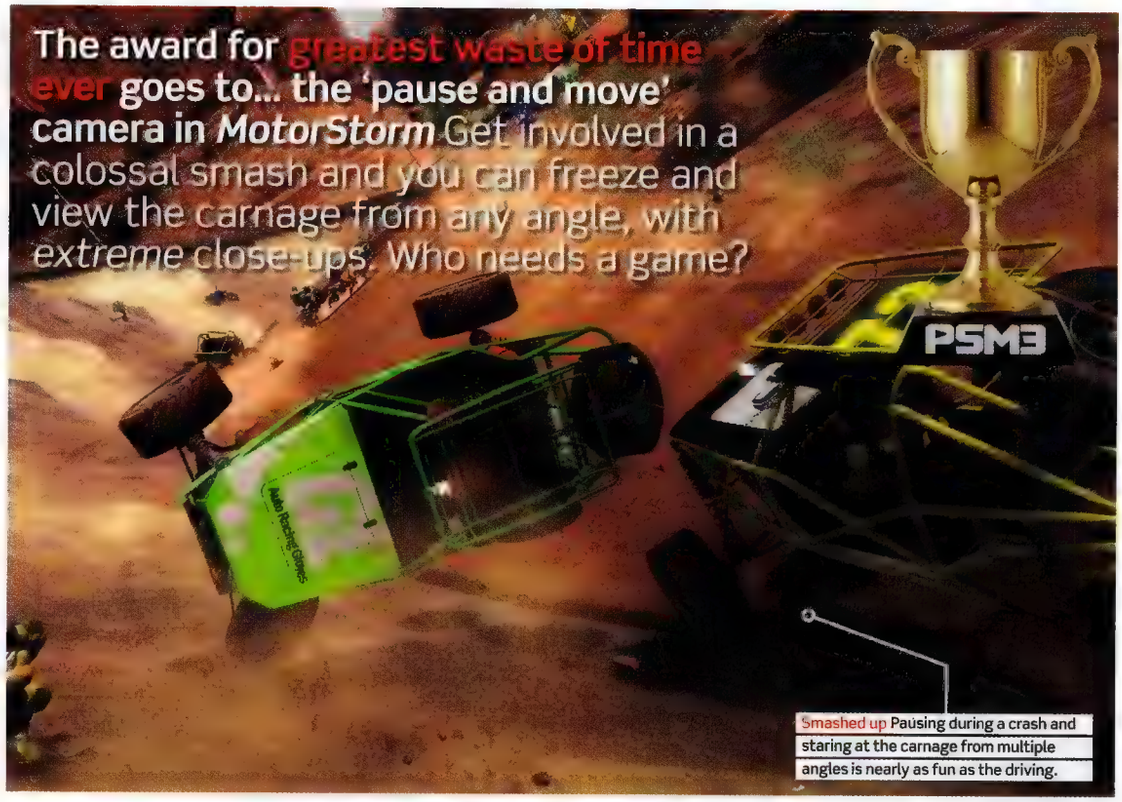
Lumines 2
Buena Vista | PSP
"Lumines remains one of PSP's best games. Simple and hugely addictive, games like this are what your PSP was made for. Hypnotic – you'll play for ages."
PSM3 Rating 92%

Frankie Dettori Racing

"'Allowing friendly play over the internet.' Yeah, the servers are going to be absolutely bursting"

PSM3 Awards

The highlights (and lowlights) of this month's reviews

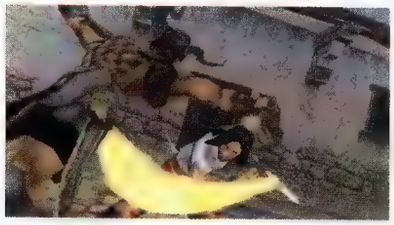

The award for greatest waste of time ever goes to... the 'pause and move' camera in MotorStorm Get involved in a colossal smash and you can freeze and view the carnage from any angle, with extreme close-ups. Who needs a game?
PSM3

Smashed up Pausing during a crash and staring at the carnage from multiple angles is nearly as fun as the driving.

Ubisoft | PSP | Out now

Prince Of Persia: Rival Swords

The original free-runner returns



Instead of creating a new *PoP*, we've once again been 'treated' to another PS2 port, this time of *The Two Thrones*. Anyone who played the previous PSP game will be pleased to hear that it no longer freezes every few steps the prince takes, making the gameplay much more fluid and involving. The controls are excellent and instinctive and the graphics are really rather stunning, although they're just too dark to enjoy fully. The camera, however, is fiddly and PSP's small screen makes picking out your next jump quite tricky but, once you get the hang of it, the Prince shows his class. Excellent level design is in abundance and the stealth kills are sweet.

There are some quick-play chariot races available from the main menu to add an element of 'pick-up-and-play'ness to the game, but although the whole package is more solid and convincing this time round, it still feels like you should really be playing this on a big telly rather than the small screen. **Justin Towell**

75

Oxygen | PS2 | Out now

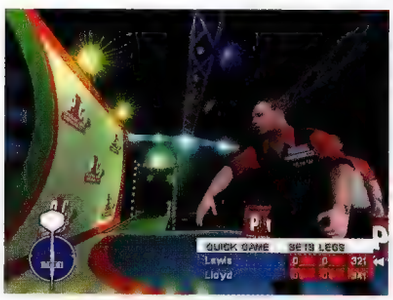
PDC World Championship Darts

Let's see what you could 'ave won

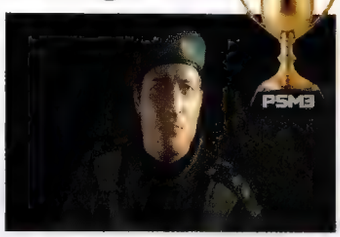
What do you expect from a darts game? This does it. A selection of ten (fat) pasty looking blokes with nicknames like 'Darth Maple', 'Jaws', 'Hawaii 501' and 'One Dart' wobble about in front of you for a few seconds before you're faced with a close up of the 20 on a dartboard, a small power bar and a reticule. Pull back on the right analogue stick and flick it forward to throw your arrow. It's darts on your PS2. And that's more or less it.

You'd think getting to play in one of three locations, Las Vegas, Rotterdam or... Essex would provide extra excitement, but no. Instead we have adequate controls, with adequate graphics, representing a sport that is – let's face it – lacking in fireworks. The looks could be more polished, sure, but why bother when the sport and the process of playing it is so simple? If you want darts – this is it. **Daniel Griffiths**

61



The best accents award goes to...



Resistance: Fall Of Man
There's nothing like felling aliens to the sound of thick Rochdale accents. "By 'eck, them aliens are fast like whippets, love."

The worst camera award goes to...

Genji: Days Of The Blade
The static camera means constantly battling enemies stood off-screen. Who's behind this? They need 'sorting out'.

Buyer Beware! The games they're afraid to send us

Hawk Kawasaki Racing Midas
"The sequel to the European-wide hit, *Crescent Suzuki Racing*!" Anybody? *Anybody*? No? Thought not.

Frankie Dettori Racing Alternative Software
"Allowing competitive and friendly play over the internet!" Yeah, we bet the servers are going to be absolutely *bursting*.

Hi-Score Table

☐ Resistance: Fall Of Man	p52	90%
☐ MotorStorm	p58	88%
☐ Tiger Woods 2007 PS3	p64	82%
☐ World Snooker 2007	p83	80%
☐ Tony Hawk's Project 8	p62	80%
☐ NBA 2K7	p84	80%
☐ Ridge Racer 7	p72	80%
☐ EA Cricket 2007	p82	79%
☐ Mortal Kombat Unchained	p80	77%
☐ Wild Arms 4	p84	77%
☐ Price of Persia: RS	p85	75%
☐ TOCA 3: Challenge	p83	74%
☐ LA Rush	p83	74%
☐ Eragon	p81	70%
☐ Thrillville	p83	66%
☐ Saint Seiya: The Sanctuary	p81	62%
☐ PDC World Champ Darts	p85	61%
☐ Genji: Days Of The Blade	p78	60%
☐ Scooby Doo: WWW	p81	59%
☐ NFS Carbon PS3	p76	58%
☐ Superman Returns	p70	55%
☐ Phantasy Star Universe	p66	50%
☐ Dragon Ball Z: BT2	p83	49%
☐ Star Wars: Lethal Alliance	p68	47%
☐ SpongeBob: Crusty Crab	p83	46%

Playing PlayStation Longer Harder Deeper

Extended Play

Start

GENIUS

88 10 reasons why *Leisure Suit Larry* is better than you think
Tree sex and dildo-toting monkeys anyone?

EXPLOITS

92 Get all the best vehicles in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories*
How to find the coolest rides in Vice City.

SECRETS

94 See *Juiced*'s terrible lost intro
How Shystie almost made *Juiced* a complete laughing stock.

FACE-OFF

96 Kicking the cheeky smiles off Ant and Dec's faces
You know they deserve it. We give it to them.

ONLINE

98 Breaking necks online in *Splinter Cell: Double Agent*
DA online is sparser than Sam Fisher's haircut.

CLASSIC

100 *TimeSplitters 2* is PS2's greatest FPS
A look back at the sheer lunatic genius that was *TimeSplitters 2*.

NATION

102 Would you give up your PS3 for sex?
That was what people queuing for PS3 in the US were asked.

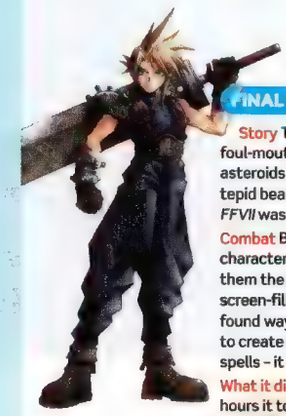
NATION

103 An offer you can't refu-shoes... [dies]
Fancy some swish Godfather footwear? Tough, you've got these.

PLAYSTATION CELEBRATION

The evolution of... Final Fantasy

After 19 years of evolution and transmutation, *Final Fantasy* is still the world's favourite RPG series. Why? Because no matter how much Square Enix temper and adjust it, its key elements remain intact – a touching, dramatic script, genuine character development, enormous scale and intuitive turn-based role-playing. Hironobu Sakaguchi, the legendary producer behind the series' best games, has cited *Final Fantasy VII* as being responsible for its incredible success in the West and it's from there that we begin our journey through the series' highs and lows...



FINAL FANTASY VII

Story Talking cats, transvestism, eco-terrorism, foul-mouthed astronauts, planet-shattering asteroids and evil corporations – compared to the tepid beards, trolls and sorcery of Western RPGs, *FFVII* was a breath of fresh, crazy air.

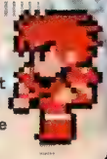
Combat By plugging materia orbs into your characters' weapons and armour you could grant them the ability to chuck magic about and summon screen-filling deities to help in battle. Clever folk found ways of combining different types of materia to create their own unique, devastatingly-powerful spells – it was that flexible.

What it did right Just about everything. In the 70 hours it took us to complete, we grew so attached to the characters. In fact, when one of them died at the end of disc one we *actually* cried.

What it did wrong Dodgy 'Engrish' dialogue. It took a sledgehammer to the illusion that you were battling evil in a rich fantasy world and not a playing games in a stinking bedsit.

CHOCOBO

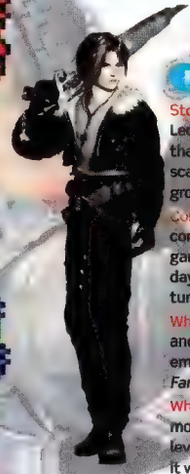
The FF equivalent of a horse, these adorable creatures have been in every single game.



FINAL FANTASY
Any good? Basic and unplayable these days, but it's the one that started it all and we should pay it the respect it deserves.

FINAL FANTASY II
Any good? A bit better. There was a decent story to follow and the class system was developing nicely.

FINAL FANTASY III
Any good? This is when the series hit its stride. The combat was brilliantly intuitive for the time. You can get a fantastic 3D remake of this on DS.



FINAL FANTASY VIII

Story Apathetic, sour-faced student Squall Leonhart graduates from Balamb Garden, a school that trains elite soldiers. One series of political scandals later and he finds himself working for a group of anti-government resistance fighters.

Combat The game's junctioning skill system was so complex and unorthodox that it terrified lazier gamers, but rewarded those who gave it the time of day with malleable characters that could be finely-tuned by combining magic spells with stats.

What it did right Seriously-proportioned characters and a vibrant world rich with detail made it, emotionally, one of the most sophisticated *Final Fantasies* yet. It didn't make us cry though.

What it did wrong The power of a boss or a regular monster would adjust to suit your own personal level of strength. Pointless, and sort of patronising. It weakened the challenge considerably.

Final Fantasy XIII

So what does the future hold for *Final Fantasy*? PS3's mighty power means that visually, in-game action in *FFXIII* looks every inch as good as Square Enix's famously gorgeous CG, and Tetsuya Nomura's beautiful design really flourishes as a result. From what we've seen, combat is a lot more frantic and dynamic than earlier *FF* games.

The only main character confirmed so far is the pink-haired lady in the trailers, but apparently she isn't the protagonist. To get an idea of the style of the game, director Motomu Toriyama explained that he wanted the battles to be as overblown as the ones in CG spin-off movie FFVII: Advent Children, but still playable.

There's also talk of the game having special online features. But producer Yoshinori Kitase stresses that it's a traditional offline single-player experience, so don't worry about another *Final Fantasy XI*-style upset.

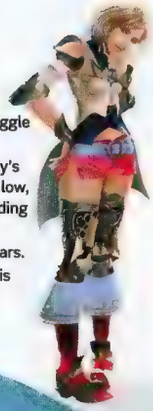
FINAL FANTASY XII

Story Street urchin Vaan gets involved in a politicial struggle between two great nations in a world called Ivalice.

Combat The gambit system lets you 'program' your party's behaviour – telling them to focus on healing if your HP is low, for example. You have to 'earn' abilities and spells by trading in license points won in battle.

What it did right The first *really* great *Final Fantasy* in years.

What it did wrong Like *FFX*, the free-roaming world map is gone and you jump between locations via a menu.



FINAL FANTASY XI

Story Well, there isn't one. Because, foolishly, Square Enix decided that the eleventh game in the *FF* series should be a massively multi-player online RPG. There are plot elements, but they're only there to add atmosphere to the world.

Combat For the first time in the series, *FFXI* let you move around in real-time while battling monsters. But the fighting itself was the same as ever – selecting options from a menu and so forth. There was also a complicated 'claim' and 'hate' system that kept fights fair, so as not to upset snotty online idiots.

What it did right As far as online RPGs go, it was relatively clever. The level-up system was intelligent and you could only attack other people under special conditions.

What it did wrong It should never have been part of the official series timeline. It doesn't feel like a *Final Fantasy* game and newbies will struggle at first.

At the core of Final Fantasy
AIRSHIPS
A visual trademark of the series, airships always play a part in any Final Fantasy adventure.
MOOGLES
They pop up every where, you even get to control a mob of them in FFVI on SNES.
CID
There's been a character named Cid in every FF. This one's Cid Highwind from FFVII.

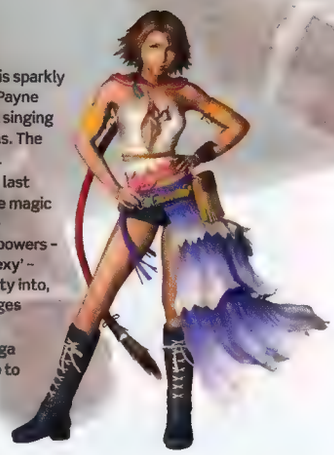
FINAL FANTASY X-2

Story The miserable *FFX* gave way to this sparkly slapstick epic. Yuna, Rikku and new pal Payne formed a J-pop group and they go about singing and solving the world's political concerns. The first directly-linked sequel to a FF game.

Combat Mixing the sphere grid from the last game and the classic *FF* class sytem, the magic and combat in *X-2* was surprisingly well-designed. Different outfits with unique powers – all of which are incredibly skimpy and 'sexy' – could be worn and transformed your party into, among other things, warriors, white mages and summoners.

What it did right It continued the *FFX* saga and told you what the characters got up to after defeating Sin. And the intro movie was absolutely brilliant.

What it did wrong It used a lot of *FFX*'s assets and most of the locations were the same, which made it feel slightly inferior to a traditional *FF* sequel.

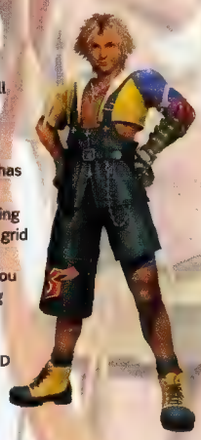


FINAL FANTASY X

Story You are Tidus, foppish jock and blitzball star, an underwater sport popular in *FFX*'s universe. But – SHOCK! – you've been transported a hundred years into the future and discovered that – SHOCK! (2) – your dad has turned into an evil whale. Obviously.

Combat People confused by *FFVIII*'s junctioning must have been *overwhelmed* by the sphere grid in *FFX*. It's a sprawling web of abilities and powers that, by earning experience points, you moved across slowly, block by block, shaping your character along the way. Master it, though, and the results are satisfying.

What it did right It looked ace and the fully-3D environments were a first for the series, making exploration feel like a genuinely new experience.



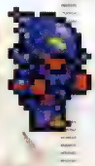
FINAL FANTASY IX

Story Out go the retro-fit futuristic settings and in come the monkey-tailed thief boys and medieval castles.

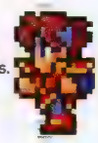
Combat The class system from ye olde *Final Fantasy* games – specific skills for specific characters – was back, but there was still an element of customisation.

What it did right It was a hark back to 'old' *Final Fantasy*, a style that had been abandoned since FFVI on the SNES. It made us feel all warm and nostalgic.

What it did wrong Card game Tetra Master was abysmal.



FINAL FANTASY IV
Any good? Very much so. The character-driven plot, Nobuo Uematsu score and ATB battle system all became series staples.



FINAL FANTASY V
Any good? The job system from the old games returns. Characters could change fighting styles, like the warrior pictured here.

FINAL FANTASY VI
Any good? This could be the best of the entire series. Seriously. It was *huge* and had a seriously engrossing plot. And all on SNES too.

PlayStation 2
LEISURE SUIT LARRY
Pub VU Games
Dev High Voltage
FYI PS2 | 2004 | PSM54 80%
Larry Lovage is a college student who'll do anything for love – invariably with tragic results. Can you help steer Larry to shallow happiness?
Willie's erection: Larry humiliates himself to impress a lady – typically, 'she' is actually a man.
Turtle madness: Larry helps a lady confess dirty thoughts via her love of puppets.

PLAYSTATION GENIUS

10 reasons why Leisure Suit Larry is the best 'worst' game ever

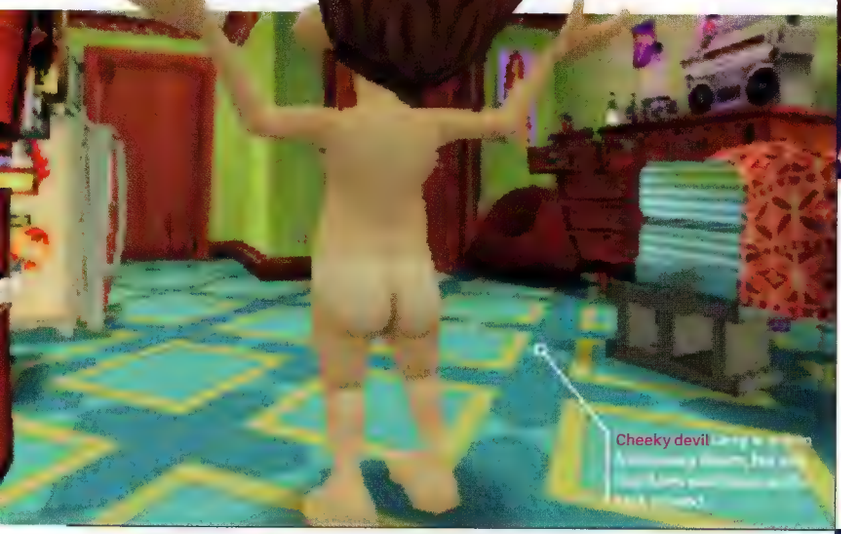
Dan Dawkins

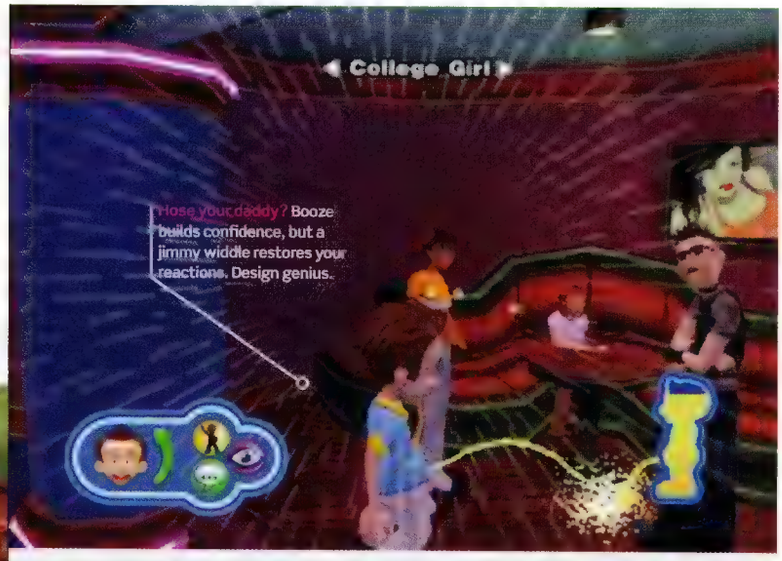
1 LARRY HAS NO SHAME

Whether he's impressing country girls by pretending to sing Willie Nelson, encouraging cheerleaders to confess their secrets to sex therapy hand-puppet Timmy the Turtle or stripping naked to distract the campus security guard from a saucy environmental protester, it's hard not to admire Larry's disarming honesty. He'll do anything – literally *anything* – to, er, 'ascend the mount of Venus', and his respect is both a paradigm of Freudian sublimation and Nietzschian 'Will to Power'. Oh, and he's got all the moves and can do blowoffs *at any time*. What a guy.

2 BUT THE JOKE'S ALWAYS ON HIM

Larry's shameless pursuit of the 'valley beneath the 13 amp fuse wire', would be despicable if it didn't always end in tragedy. Hours into the game, he's been pursued by the Mafia, despoiled by pigeons, attacked by a Russian spy, stalked by a mentalist and had his, er, 'Werther's Originals' snorkelled by a trannie. But he *still* keeps going. Respect.





3 YOU CAN DO A WEE ANY TIME...

Yes, we've all smirked at Laslow's one liners in *GTA: Vice City* or raised a wry smile at the cut-scenes in *Lego Star Wars 2*, but until you've held ⓡ and rotated the left stick 360° to unleash a dazzling fountain of hot piss over appalled onlookers as they cover their faces, squirm and complain about their shoes, then, frankly, you've never *laughed* at a game. And it's always funny.

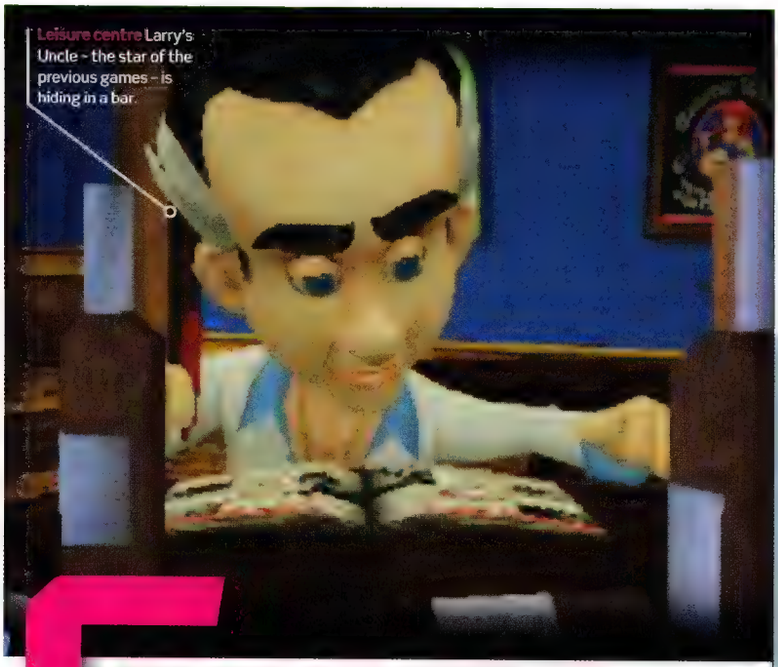
4 ... OR EMIT RED HOT BUM GAS

You're probably thinking this is a bit puerile – because it is – but you'll never tire of walking past hacky sack man, and snapping a beef biscuit just as he nears his record. Oh, and you use farts to examine objects.

5 HORNY MONKEY BRAIN SWAP WOE

Larry dresses as a nerd and tries to trick his saucy biology teacher into bed by exploiting her marital difficulties, but receives a grave punishment – having his mind possessed by a priapic monkey. Larry's escape – involving a banana and some furious 'shaking hands with the unemployed' needs to be seen to be disbelieved.

ON THE DISC
Like games a little insania? Check out God Hand



6 INSANE DETAIL

Not only can you fart on every piece of scenery to search for money or secret tokens – used to 'buy' your way out of tough minigames, creating genius balance – but the world *hums* with sight gags and hidden detail. It's honestly even richer than *GTA*.

How swoon is now? The gay bar owner defies all stereotypes. Oh, wait, *this* guy...
Lez is more Wallflower Ione has 'turned' as a result of Larry's shameless activities

8 TURN' WOMEN THE OTHER WAY

Yes, that's Larry in a gay club, talking to the world's campest stereotype in an attempt to placate the world's butchest lesbian, but *that's the point*. If you find, say, the Borat movie funny, you'd be well advised to check out Larry singing "She was straight, but now she's turned gay," to the chorus of Hot Summer Nights from Grease. It's so wilfully crass only a fool would complain.

7 BEST LOADING SCREENS EVER

OK, so they're not so brilliant if you're a) A genuine prude, b) A concerned mum or c) One of those sickening hypocrites who openly deplores the exploitation of women but spends their nights searching for *proper* filth on the t'interweb, but Larry's loading screens are certainly quite, um, diverting. Handy since the loading times are *awful*.

9 CRISP-EATING SEX BEAR BIT

The question of course, is *why* you're being berated by a shaven-haired lesbian. Let's just say, there's an early scene where she asks Larry to titillate her with a 'special' belt. Our hero expresses doubts, but everything seems fine... until the lights come on.

Should be band

The ones we didn't pick...

Quarters
As we all know, the best way to charm a woman into bed is to lie repeatedly, get her drunk then win a minigame where you use the right analogue stick to toss coins in a jar. Honestly. Just ask Andy.

The best dialogue ever
The variety – and quality – of dialogue is astounding. Better yet, you control the conversation via a swimming sperm, with multiple paths.

Bilzarbra's sexy photoshoot
The only hit that you'd [illegible] accidentally walked into the room. You'll have to play the game to see what we mean, but – *brrr*..

EMAIL PSM3 @
Disagree with our choice? Then send us your picks
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

ON THE DISC
See Vice City Stories reviewed on the DVD now

PLAYSTATION EXPLOITS

The coolest vehicles in GTA: Vice City Stories

Dave Harrison

EMAIL PSM3
Want a game exploded in ludicrous detail? Tell us:
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Pub Rockstar
Dev Rockstar
FYI PS2 | 2006 | PSM81 90%
Set in 1984, before the original visit to the city of drugs and debauchery, *VCS* charts the fall of Vic Vance from soldier to drug lord and the rise of Lance Vance from idiot to rich idiot.

VEHICLE COLLECTION 25 of the choicest rides

For the return to Vice City, Rockstar have come up with an eclectic choice of rides, some new to the city and some new to the whole series. This time around, there are certain vehicles that don't spawn and have to be bought.

Ride... Quad Bike
Find it The Quad Bike appeared in *San Andreas*, now it shows up in Vice City courtesy of the Rednecks in the trailer park. You can buy the Quad Bike from Sunshine Autos for $3000.

Ride... Hunter
Find it The ultimate chopper and a mainstay of the series, you need to swipe this from the military base. It comes with a chaingun and missiles and plays a large part in the final missions.

Ride... Bovver 64
Find it You can buy the Bovver 64 from the rear of the Clymenus Suite. Just pay out $4500 to get this amazing hovercraft, which you might remember first appearing in *San Andreas*.

Ride... Bulletproof limo
Find it Essential for couriering VIPs, this limousine is a snip at only $3000 from Sunshine Autos. Not only does it look stylish and handle like a dream, but it's also impervious to bullets.

Ride... The Sparrow
Find it An extremely handy chopper, the Sparrow is lightweight and easy to handle. It comes in a 'sea' flavour as well and can be found on the helipad at the Escobar airport. Seats two.

Ride... BF Injection
Find it Find this at the beaches of Vice Point. Once inside, you'll access the Beach Ranger mission. Get to level 15 to get infinite swimming stamina and a bulletproof Injection.

Ride... VCPD Maverick
Find it The Maverick is a great all-round helicopter that is used for many shooting missions as it seat four. This is VCPD one which can be found on top of the Washington Beach station.

Ride... Splitz 6-ATV
Find it Anywhere, as it can slide through water too, although. it's quite slow over the waves. It's yours for a mere $3000 from just outside the safe house in the Compound. Treat yourself.

Ride... BMX
Find it *San Andreas* was the first *GTA* to have pushbikes, and now these BMXs have made it into *Vice City Stories*. Can be found by the gun shop in Little Havana. Now go pop a wheelie.

Ride... Marquis
Find it While other boats might have more power, nothing beat the Marquis for that ultimate '80s vibe. You can almost imagine Duran Duran holidaying on it. Found by the Ocean Beach Jetty.

Ride... Little Willie
Find it Probably the best new vehicle in game, this micro-helicopter is much like Little Nellie from You Only Live Twice. Armed with machine guns, it's yours to buy at the Clymenus Suite for $5000.

Ride... Jet Ski
Find it This can be found round the back of the movie studios and opens up some time trial challenges. Finish all eight of them and you'll unlock this rather fetching wetsuit for Vic. Clingy.

Ride... Caddy
Find it Useless aside from the fact that it always rights itself whenever it tips over but it adds a surreal menace to your average drive-by. Find it on the golf course and in the movie studio.

Ride... Mr Whoopee
Find it Unlike the ice-cream truck in *Vice City*, this isn't a coy way of supplying drugs – it's just a daft old ice-cream truck. You can find Mr Whoopee over by the Chunderwheel.

Ride... Coach
Find it It might look dull, but find the Coach round the back of the movie studio and you'll unlock a mission that allows you go on a destructive rampage round the city.

Ride... Biker Angel
Find it This particular hog can be found in Lance's garage after a shootout with the biker gang. The Biker Angel plays a big part in the Light My Pyre mission, so get used to riding it.

Ride... Infernus
Find it Another vehicle that Lance takes a shine to, and the most iconic car from *Vice City*. Stylish and super-speedy, it's a fantastic ride, though and you can get hold of it from Lance's garage.

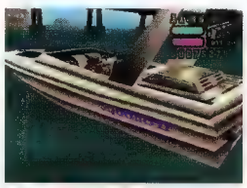
Ride... Phoenix
Find it A two-seater that combines speed, stability and good durability. Not the most lady-pulling of motors, but it's a good all-rounder that's found a lot around the Mall area.

Ride... Polaris V8
Find it This is a four-seater that's quick and easy to handle. It looks cool and has a mean engine growl. Found outside any brothel – clearly the clients aren't doing badly for themselves.

Ride... Jetmax
Find it One of the powerboats you can find on the Vice City waterways, the Jetmax is noteworthy for its lightning quick acceleration that can get you out of trouble in a flash.

Ride... Stinger
Find it A nippy convertible that can be found near the Ocean Beach jetties. It's one of the cars that Victor can get into by leaping over the doors – great for quick access when you're being chased.

Ride... Tropic
Find it One of the most common sea vessels in the game though it's not often docked – try the waters around Starfish Island. Perfect for a leisurely cruise around the bay.



Ride... Squallo II
Find it A great boat that can be found at the Ocean Beach jetty. It's sharp and easy to handle but it does leave the driver somewhat exposed to gunfire from enemies.

Ride... PCJ 600
Find it Probably the best bike in the game, it's the quickest thing on wheels. Blessed with extraordinary acceleration, it also corners wonderfully. You'll find the PCJ challenge outside the mall.

Ride... Wintergreen
Find it This can be found in civilian and police flavours and is a very pleasant ride. Not as quick as the PCJ, but easy to handle. Just don't try and take one from a cop or he'll blast your eyes out.

Vehicle FAQ

Q There are missions that require drive-by shooting, but as you can't steer while performing one I find them difficult. Any tips?

A If you're required to [illegible] target [illegible] to the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

GameAmmo

"Complete the shooting ranges for discounts at Ammu-Nation"

MATES The five best multi-player characters

If you're going to 'do' multi-player you've got to look the part. While choosing a SWAT member or a soldier makes sense, being a transsexual has a strange allure to it. In the game, that is.

'Be'... Ricardo Diaz
Two advantages here – he's small, if a little overweight, and so is harder to hit – and he's a complete psychopath, making Tony Montana look well adjusted.

'Be'... Reni Wassulmaier
Reni may look odd, but that could play into your hands. Opponents will spend so long trying to figure out what he is you'll have time to empty your Colt Python.

'Be'... Alberto
Not a major player, but what a character! Craggy-faced, white haired and a shirt so loud it drowns out the gunfire, he's the choice of those who enjoy trouble.

'Be'... Bub
The star of the Brawn Of The Dead shootout in the mall, Bub likes long walks, fresh air and human brains. Surely a great choice as he's already dead.

'Be'... Candy Barr
Supple and athletic, this exotic dancer has all the equipment to become the ultimate maneater. Blend in with the bikini babes on the beach if possible.

ATTRACTIONS A grand day out

Shoot to kill If you need a break from the crime, there are all sorts of other distractions to fill your day in Vice City with. Like this rather fine shooting gallery.

The Chunder Wheel New to Vice City is this fairground. Unfortunately there's only one ride – this rather pedestrian Ferris wheel. It does offer some stunning views, though.

Driving Range This becomes available after completing the Homes On The Range mission. Now you can test your driving skill with a golf club, firing balls across the water at a buoy.

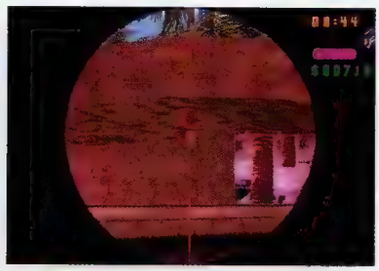
Phil Collins Concert After the In The Air Tonight mission, you can return to the stadium to hear a stirring rendition of the hit single sung by the man himself. It'll cost you $6000 (!) though.

HIDDEN BITS Secrets of the city

The fake-bottomed boat Opposite the 101 Bayhorse Avenue safehouse is a huge ship. Drop into the water at the left and swim at the hull. You'll slip into the boat and find this sign.

The ten happy faces Like the boat message, there are ten more happy faces to be found. Here's the last, found under the bridge just to the east of the golf course. Hilarious!

Nob-ility Rockstar have never been above using a good nob joke, so there's plenty of innuendo to discover on posters and shops. There's even phallic fun on some skyscrapers.



99 luftballons Rather than having hidden packages Vice City has red balloons – 99 of them. Rather than collecting them, you burst them – but they're in some unlikely places.

SOCIAL CLIMBING From rags to riches: a pictorial

Here we chart the story of Victor Vance from law-abiding soldier to maniac drug dealing killer – via his choice of interior décor. We begin with Victor in his army fatigues in the military barracks.

Step 1... Army Barracks
Vic was a good man until Captain Martinez involved him in dirty deals. This is the first safe house you'll have. It's lost once Vic gets kicked out of the military.

Step 2... Bayhorse Avenue
These are Victor's digs on leaving the army, near the docks with good access to Little Haiti and the airport. Vic's in his Casual outfit. As he's being casual.

Step 3... The Compound
You'll recognise this as Phil Cassidy's home in *Vice City* – it used to belong to Vic. As he's living in a scruffy cabin, he's in his charming Trailer Trash outfit.

Step 4... Clymenus Suite
After a few deals Vic can afford this flat on the eastern island with a great view of the Chunderwheel. And check the threads – this is the Winner's Outfit.

Final step... The Club
Victor is never short of places to call home – there are 30 businesses he can take over and make his own. From lowly soldier, he now owns half the city.

BIG BUSINESS Constructing an empire

New to *GTA* is the Empire Building feature, which allows you to take over 30 premises from rival gangs and convert in them into one of six different businesses. Each has their own building and costume.

Step 1... Prostitution
What better than helping young women get a start in life? Do 15 missions to be the Mack Daddy, build a High Roller to get the best brothel and this leisure suit.

Step 2... Loan sharking
Here you must retrieve vehicles that haven't been paid for, 15 in total. A High Roller building comes with its own crew and this Repo Man suit.

Step 3... Protection
A case of muscling out rival gangs and putting the fear into store owners. Do 15 missions to become the Ultimate Badass and get this Hired Muscle suit.

Step 4... Drugs
A certain white powder is the currency of Vice City. Do six drug deals and you'll get this set-up, this Pastel Suit and become the Smack Daddy.

Final step... Robbery
Hijack other gangs' bounties in order to fill up your warehouses. In return you'll get this not terribly discreet Hood outfit. Very *Manhunt*.

ON THE DISC

PLAYSTATION SECRETS

Laughing in disbelief at the worst intro video ever in Juiced

"Shystie does karate and shouts 'Tits up, foot down, pedal to the flooooor!'"

Crime doesn't pay
This is Shystie who, back in 2004, was being tipped as the new Ms Dynamite by *Juiced*'s former publisher Acclaim – shortly before they went bust and we never heard of her again.

1 Dancin' in da street

Road to nowhere The intro movie kicks off with Shystie doing karate and shouting, "Tits up, foot down, pedal to the flooooor!" while pretending to drive a virtual car over the world's most amateur blue-screen. Trust us, this is the *good* bit...

2 Mind the traffic

Check dis out With Acclaim's budget of 27 pence blown, the producer is reduced to filming a posse of Kwik Fit employees breakdancing against a wall, praying his demo-version editing software lets him overlay footage of oncoming traffic. Result!

3 All bets are off

Day stripper By the time they'd ripped up the chequered flag to make the girl's skirts and told the crew members to shut up and do without buttons, it was too late. Oddly, Acclaim's version of *Juiced* never hit the shops, but this film will be on our DVD soon. Oh yes.

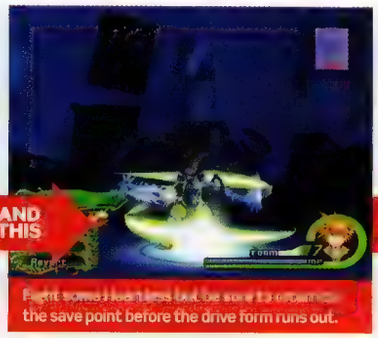
GameAmmo

"There are 50 different types of car to drive in *Juiced*"

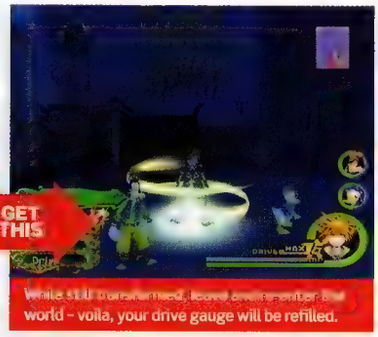
PlayStation's best kept secrets uncovered every month

Glitch › **Kingdom Hearts 2** › Level-up drive gauge

To level up your drive forms quickly, transform into any drive form near a save point...

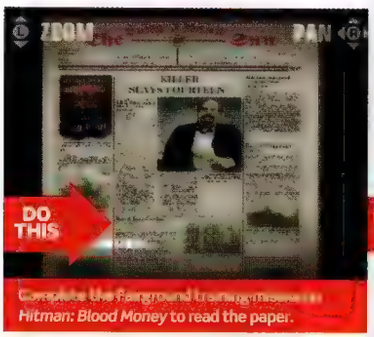


Fight some heartless but be sure to return to the save point before the drive form runs out.



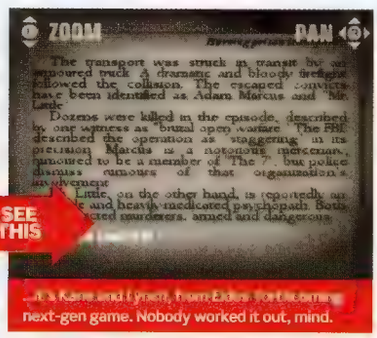
While still transformed, leave and re-enter the world – voila, your drive gauge will be refilled.

Hidden tribute › **Hitman: Blood Money** › Kane and Lynch



Complete the fairground training mission in *Hitman: Blood Money* to read the paper.

Scroll around to the bottom left to read a story of two men escaping police custody...

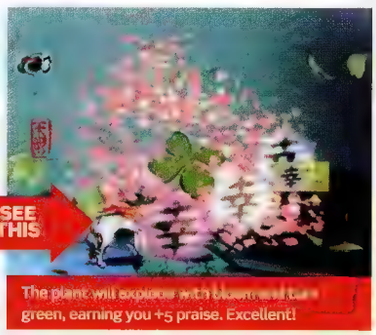


...it's Kane and Lynch, from Eidos' forthcoming next-gen game. Nobody worked it out, mind.

Hidden secrets › **Okami** › Dying clovers

Dig up a clover and you'll hear the trademark 'bing bong' of Clover Studios' logo.

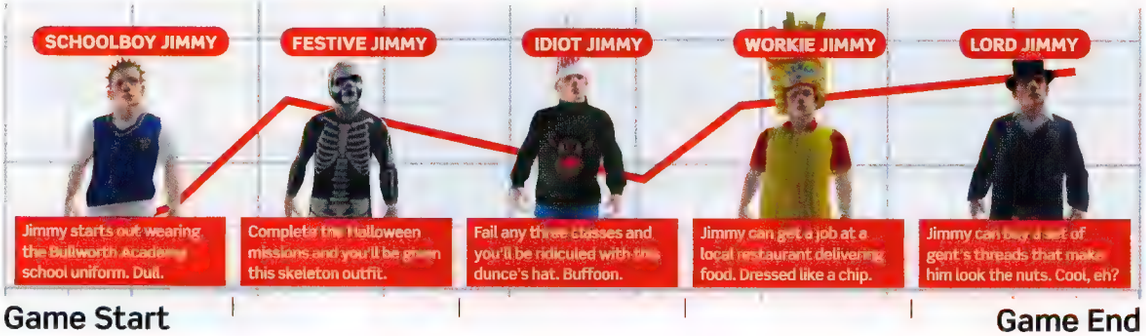
Use your sprout brush technique to bring the clover to life. Do forgive our dodgy circle here.



The plant will explode with bloom and turn green, earning you +5 praise. Excellent!

From zero to hero in... Canis Canem Edit

Jimmy Hopkins becomes a fashion victim at the school of hard knocks


SCHOOLBOY JIMMY
FESTIVE JIMMY
IDIOT JIMMY
WORKIE JIMMY
LORD JIMMY
Jimmy starts out wearing the Bullworth Academy school uniform. Dull.
Complete the Halloween missions and you'll be given this skeleton outfit.
Fail any three classes and you'll be ridiculed with this dunce's hat. Buffoon.
Jimmy can get a job at a local restaurant delivering food. Dressed like a chip.
Jimmy can buy a set of gent's threads that make him look the nuts. Cool, eh?
Madness
Game Start
Game End

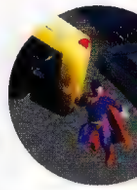
The Top 5

Cheats you *must* know

1 Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories

Replenish health

While playing the game, press ↑, ↓, ←, →, ◎, ←, →. If this code is enabled when your car is smoking or damaged, it will get repaired. Like magic.



2 Justice League Heroes

Invincibility

Pause, then hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and press ←, ↓, →, ↑, ←, ↓, →, ↑. to be invincible. Which Superman really should be *anyway*.

3 Mortal Kombat: Armageddon

Unlock Spire Arena

At the "?" box inside the Krypt, press L2, ◎, ↑, △, L2.

4 Need For Speed: Carbon

Infinite nitrous

At the title screen, press ←, ↑, ←, ↓, ←, ↓, →, ◎. If you entered the code correctly, a message will tell you so.

5 Guitar Hero 2

Unlock all bonuses

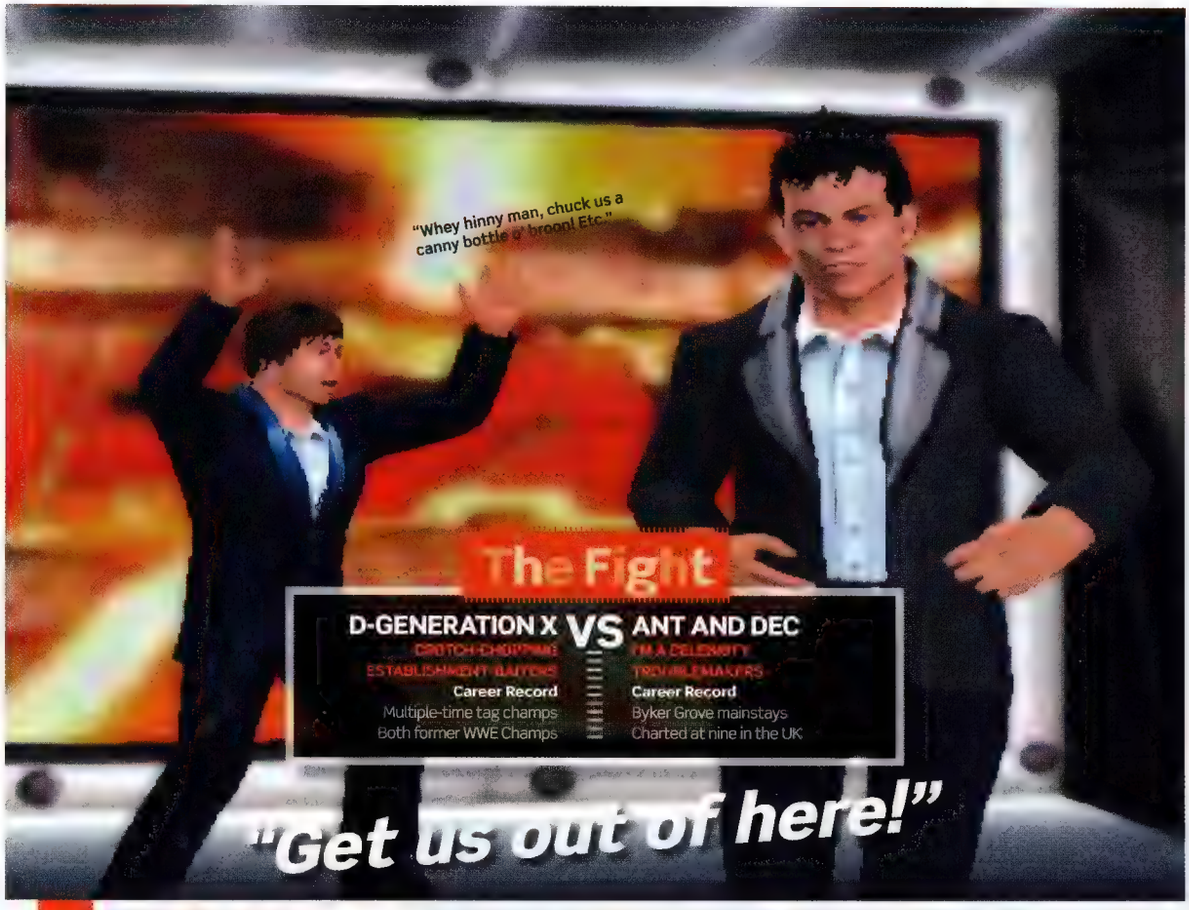
At the main menu, quickly press blue, yellow, orange, orange, yellow, blue, yellow, blue, yellow, blue, yellow, blue, yellow, blue, yellow to get all bonuses.

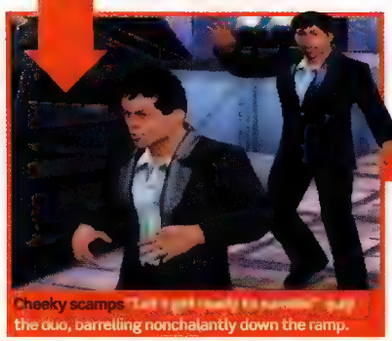
ON THE DISC
We review *Smackdown 2007* on the disc this month

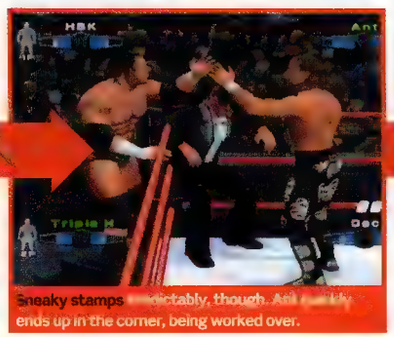
PLAYSTATION FACE-OFF

Lay the double-whammy on Ant and Dec in Smackdown

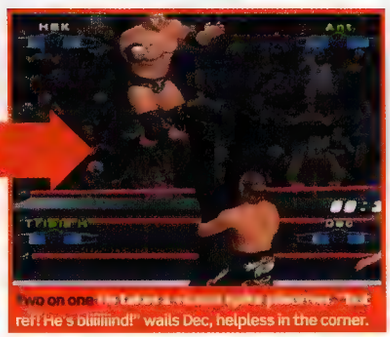
Joel Snape



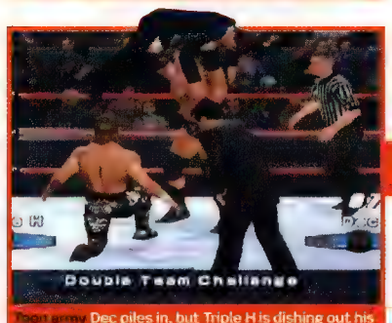

Cheeky scamps [illegible] the duo, barrelling nonchalantly down the ramp.



Sneaky stamps [illegible]ictably, though. Ant [illegible] ends up in the corner, being worked over.

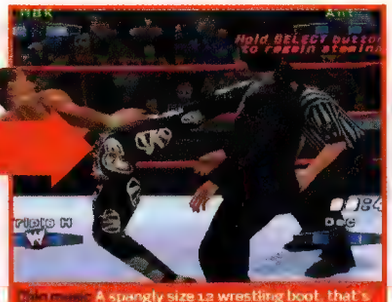


Two on one [illegible] ref! He's blllliiind!" wails Dec, helpless in the corner.



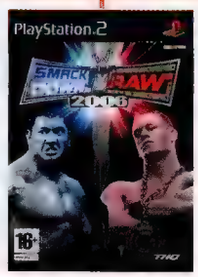
Then army Dec piles in, but Triple H is dishing out his own Saturday Night Takeaway... of PAIN!

DX Factor Michaels swings a chair and dishes out his own Bush Trucker Trial. What's on the menu?



Coin music A spangly size 12 wrestling boot, that's what. With a side order of chipped teeth. Thwok!

USE SMACKDOWN 2006



Go to Create A Wrestler mode

Editing Tip Input items in order given as some effects rely on layer stacking

MAKE ANT & DEC!

Morphing Menu for Ant

Head	(100, 100, 100, 100)
Nose	(0, 26, 60, 40, 0, 0, -3,0)
Jaw	(80, -30, 45, 69)
Height:	5'11

Morphing Menu for Dec

Head	(-20, -20, -12, -3)
Nose	(21, 24, 64, 40, 0, 0, 0, 0)
Jaw	(-40, -20, 13, 11)
Height:	5'6

Outfit Menu

Torso 1	Shirts 22/41
Torso 2	Jackets 34/58

Feet Menu

Shoes	2/47

Create-A-Stable

Create a stable called Ant and Dec and put the boys in it. Or call it PJ and Duncan and give them stupid hats, if you like...

Tweet us Who should we twat? Mail psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Example Hair 12/91 (0,0,110) means use Hair 12 of the choice of 91, leave first two values as normal, change length to 110. Leave items without values as default.

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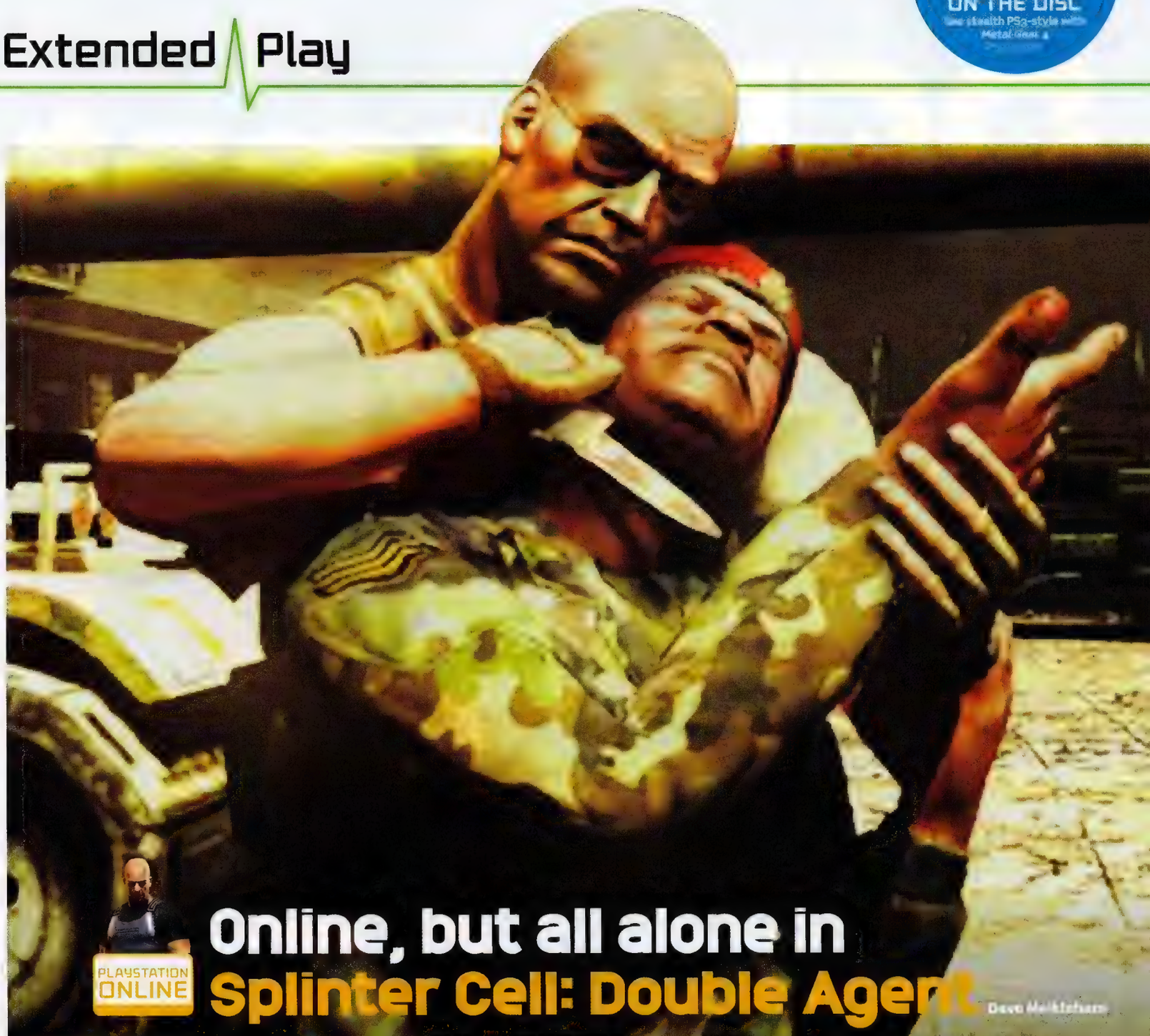
ON THE DISC
Get stealth PS3-style with Metal Gear



PLAYSTATION ONLINE

Online, but all alone in Splinter Cell: Double Agent

Dave Meikleham

Pub Ubisoft
Dev Ubisoft
FYI PS2 | 2006 | PSM3 85%
The fourth entry in the acclaimed stealth franchise sees Sam Fisher turn to the dark side. In his quest to bring down a shady terrorist organization. More top-notch espionage excellence, but *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence* still rules the stealth roost in our eyes

We know this is a stealth game and all, but trying to find players in online *Splinter Cell* is just ridiculous. It's not just that they're hard to find while you're actually playing – more on that later – but that Ubisoft's servers are more barren than a GameCube release schedule. We never found more than 30 people scattered across the three game lobbies and often we were lucky if there were enough gamers to hit double figures.

Unfortunately, the in-game action isn't much better. Matches are limited to four players, which should make for atmospheric and tense stealth encounters, but are ultimately scuppered by poor level design. The stages at your disposal are just too large and complex for four people and we spent most of our time wandering around the maps looking for an opponent. And it's as pitch black online as the single-player saga, but now your night visions goggles have a limited battery life, meaning you have to use them in small bursts. While this should provide a strategic edge, in reality it leaves you fumbling about in the dark most of the time. And we get enough of that after one too many on a Friday night.

Cell of a time

Matches always end up the same, too, with players dashing around mashing at ▢ to start the close combat mini game. While this is a good test of your reactions, it feels shallow and means you rarely use your guns or other gadgets, as running up to someone is simply more effective.

Online, there's little point in any actual sneaky stealth, which ultimately makes *Double Agent* more akin to an average third-person shooter, rather than the twisted brilliance of *Metal Gear Subsistence*. The brilliant risk versus reward gameplay that makes the 360 version such a success is completely lost from the PS2 version. It says a lot about how much (or little) we enjoyed *Cell* online that our favourite moment was coming across a gamer called Count Duckula. Ah, the memories.

ONLINE VERDICT

Lots of players? Hardly any, and really not enough to enjoy a variety of matches
Buy it just for online? In a word, no. You'd be better off with *Subsistence*.

GAMEPLAY Defining moment

We back flip off a wall onto a ledge, dangle before dropping down behind our opponent, breaking his neck with a roundhouse kick. It's just a pity that we're only playing against one other person. Bum.

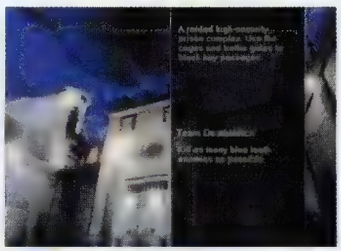
Grappling hook
Using acrobatic moves is the best way to get out of a tight spot and can help you grab those hard to reach power-ups.

Sticky shocker
Gadgets like the sticky shocker are great for temporarily freezing your opponent, giving you just enough time to snap his neck like a dry twig.

Sam Fisher
While you're not Sam, you get a choice of spies. One, mind, is basically Sam with a cheap goatee.

FEATURES Hell in the cell

The mercenaries have been left out of the PS2 game, so you're now left with two teams of near-identical spies. This means matches lack the strategic edge of the 360 version, but it's still worth mastering the game's array of gadgets and the close combat system. Read these tips for some sneaky success.



1 Inspect your gadget

The gadgets and gizmos dotted around maps can be the difference between stealth success and failure. The most useful tools are smoke grenades and sticky shockers, which incapacitate your opponent, letting you go in for the kill. Wall mines can also be an effective killing tool if placed properly. Although watch out you don't accidentally trip them off yourself. Night vision goggles are still the most useful gadget, but it's best to use them sparingly as the batteries run out quickly.

2 Close combat

The flashiest way to take down an opponent is through close combat. Simply run or sneak up to an enemy unarmed and press ⓑ. You'll then enter a minigame where you have to hit one of the face buttons quicker than the other player. Succeed and you're rewarded with your spy dishing out a lethal neck snap, hip toss or a crushing roundhouse kick. Its looks brilliant when you pull it off, but will mean instant death for those of you with slow sausage fingers.

3 Not our type

There are a number of different match types in *Double Agent*, but as there are so few people online, you'll never get the chance to test most of them. We were limited to games of Deathmatch and Team Deathmatch, which are pretty self-explanatory. There's also Sam Vs All – similar to *Subsistence*'s sneaking missions – and TeamHack. The latter is most like the 360's Spy Vs Mercs mode, similar to Capture The Flag, but lacks its tension and camaraderie.

RANKS Stats your lot

Ubisoft have neglected to include a ranking system for *Double Agent* so there's no way of tracking your match statistics.

There are petitions on the *Splinter Cell* forum on Ubi's website to have a ranking system made, but we doubt they'll do much good.

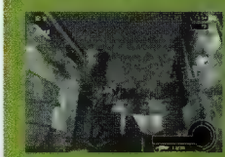
But hey, at least you can see all the top-ranked players from the last *Splinter Cell* on the website. And that's something right? *Right?*

Online Highlights

1

2

3



4

5

Harshest insult

"You're about as stealthy as Geoff Capes on a pogo stick"

Community service

Current world champion

Name Mr Playboy
Wins 8251
How Mr. Hefner has time for nearly 9000 games of *Splinter Cell* with all of those Playboy bunnies around is beyond us. This chap has spent a staggering 272 hours playing.

ON THE DISC

PLAYSTATION CLASSIC

Why TimeSplitters 2 will make your eyes bleed

George Walter

Pub Eidos | **Dev** Free Radical
FYI PS2 | 2002 | PSM2 95%
The follow-up to the PS2's original time-travelling shooter brings a legendary split-screen mode to the party.

One of our abiding memories of *'Splitters 2* is that it makes your eyes hurt. First, it's so quick that tracking the screen involves thousands of tiny shifts in direction, giving your eyeball the equivalent of a two-hour power workout on the weights. Second, it's because to close your eyes is to get shot in the face. And so you keep them open for the length of a game and all your eye-juice dries up. Four years on, nothing's changed – we're sat here, head spinning, rubbing our poor red-rimmed peepers like someone's just given us a blast of pepper spray.

TS2 is tied together by an overarching theme of time-travelling. There's a good reason for this – as well as giving the developer freedom to flit between seemingly unconnected maps, it also meant each level was set in a different period of history, with its own set of weaponry. So in the Wild West in 1853 you'd get a Garret Revolver, while in 2401 you'd have a Plasma Autorifle and its delightful purple 'stickies (more on those later). Playing through the misleadingly titled Story mode, meanwhile, you could only use the guns of the associated time period, but in multi-player Arcade mode you could mix and match as you pleased. Our favourite set-up? Shotguns, Soviet S47, Plasma Autorifle, SBP 90 Machine Gun and, of course, the all-conquering Rocket Launcher. A cosmopolitan mix of the old, contemporary and the futuristic.

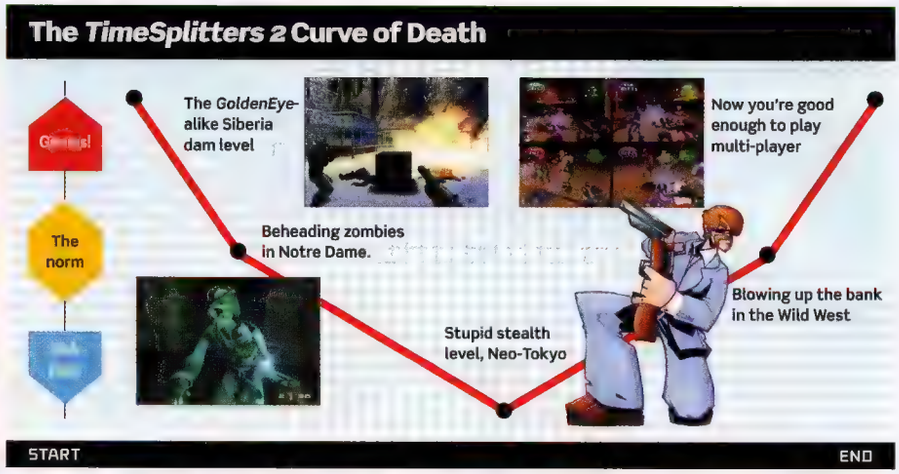
EMAIL PSM3 @
What do you think of *'Splitters 2*? Let us know: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

The best single-player level by far was the Siberian dam. Beginning at the foot of the structure you had to make your way up and inside the dam, before descending into a secret bunker filled with lumbering zombies to retrieve the time crystal. The final set-piece has you manning a gun turret, shooting down a massive attack helicopter. Other standouts were the gumshoe smoky jazz stylings of the Chicago gangster level and a Spaghetti Wild West section. It was here you'd encounter one of the coolest puzzles – breaking a character out of a jail with a barrel of gunpowder. It proved that even though *TS2* was 95% mindless hosing of gunfire, there was a cerebral element –

The defining moment...

It's visually confusing moments like this that really sum up the intensity of playing four-player split-screen *TS2*. It might look like complete bedlam (and it is) but for each of the brave men involved, they know precisely what they're doing. The really astonishing thing is that with all this commotion going on, the game never falters or stutters. Just by looking at this screen, we fancy we can hear the barking of guns.

The *TimeSplitters 2* Curve of Death



even if it usually simply involved setting fire to something.

Armed and ready

Mostly, though, it was about hosing. And multi-player. While the game's minions might have lacked personality, the guns certainly did not. We spent literally hours discussing the merits of individual weapons. While the general gist was 'use the rocket launcher and always aim at his feet', each gun had nuances that needed to be honed to Jedi-like accuracy. The grenades fired by the Soviets, for example, had a lethal splash back. Fire one off in a small room and you could expect to lose vital health. Equally, accidentally squeezing off a rocket into a nearby wall was fatal. Meanwhile, the Plasma Autorifle was a pathetic urination of a laser gun, but its secondary fire was the ingenious 'purple sticky' – a bomb that latched on to an opponent and exploded with just enough delay for the recipient to shout "SHIT! I've been stickied!" Then there was the powerful SBP go that became affectionately known as the 'butter knife' due to its ability to shred livers. We even got strangely attached to the unreliable clatter of the Tommy Guns, which had a tendency to catastrophically run out mid-firefight.

In combination with some of the tightest, cleverly-designed maps, you had a multi-player FPS of such chaotic proportions it could only be matched by exploding dynamite under your house. This really was the only game we played that could unleash primeval caveman aggression in otherwise respectable gentlemen, constantly muttering unintelligible 'bespoke' swears. Our favourite was "Do you want a slice? Do you? No. Wait. Can I *offer* you a slice?" The banter was as much fun as the game.

In essence, we've always seen *TS2*'s single-player options as a training ground for the main attraction of multi-player. You had to learn your trade, get used to the concept of aiming with your eye not a crosshair, suss out if you were inverted or not, learn how to watch other peoples' screen area to work out where they were... earn your wings, so to speak. And then, when you'd completed Space Station on Hard setting, you were probably good enough to play the best 'social' game to ever grace PS2.

CLASSIC VERDICT

Why now? Because there hasn't been a shooter since anywhere near good enough to touch this.
Final thought We want a downloadable *TS2* on the PS3 Shop with 16-player online.

The Top 5 *'Splitters* facts

1 It was in Shaun of the Dead
Simon Pegg is seen playing *TimeSplitters 2* in an early scene.

2 It was never online
TS2's planned network abilities never came to fruition. The best online game that never was?

3 It's cheating to be the Monkey
Woe betide any one who tried to play as the ape. His reduced height meant that he was much harder to aim at – and that was tantamount to cheating. Unless you were *all* the monkey, that is.

4 It's breast obsessed
All of the women in TS2 have unfeasibly large bosoms. Our fave is Ample Sally from the Wild West.

5 Smashing windows is addictive
Challenge mode offered two games – Pane In The Neck and Bricking It. Both involved breaking windows as fast as possible.

"A free lady - or ladies - of their choice"

PLAYSTATION NATION

Would you swap your PS3 for this woman?*

That was the question posed by a radio jock Adam Corrola, as hundreds of gamers queued for days outside the Best Buy in Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, for a PS3. "I was passing by the Best Buy at ten o'clock Tuesday night and saw the nerds lined up", remarked Corrola, who recently took over veteran shock jock Howard Stern's radio slot. "The only people who can stand in line for days are unemployed losers, or 'Splosers' - part spazz, all loser: sploser." Corolla send his assistant 'Big' Tad Newcomb to the store to make one of the 'splosers' an offer. Corolla quizzed the man – a 30-year-old known as 'Jay' – making frequent gags about gamers living at home, not having a woman and other stereotypes. Then a surprise guest appeared on line – porn star Ron Jeremy. He offered Jay a trip to the infamous Bunny Ranch in Nevada – a legal brothel – if he'd give up his place in the queue. "I'll give you an all-expenses paid trip, free meal, free plane trip, free place to stay and a free lady, or ladies, of your choice", offered Ron. "Anyone who has been in that line for more than a few days is someone who hasn't been laid in as many years". Jay's response? "It ain't never gonna happen." Corolla asked another man, Carlos, who also declined. Splosers might stand in line, but they're not afraid to be counted.

*Well, not *this* woman, she's a model and *nothing* to do with the Bunny Ranch. Those ladies were a little too 'showbiz' for this illustration.

Dedicated None of these men would trade PS3 for some free sexy pot-holing.

LIVE EVENTS

Play time The orchestra play the *Ghosts 'N Goblins* tune

Game music wows UK concert goers

It's a typical night at the Hammersmith Apollo. The crowd are on their feet, the lights blazing and the orchestra is in full swing – when a team of masked soldiers abseil from the roof and hijack the stage. Suddenly, an exclamation mark glows above one soldier's head, as a box with legs shuffles in the background. As the surging strings of *Metal Gear Solid* echo through the hall, it's becoming clear this is far from a typical night at the theatre. We're at Videogames Live, where the English National Ballet Symphony are playing the theme songs from classic games such as *Zelda*, *Final Fantasy* and *Pong* to hundreds of feverishly excited gamers. The concert combines an orchestra with stunning light displays, mixing live video, performance and on-stage game playing. The show has already been a success in the USA, with 13 sell-out concerts, including one at the legendary Hollywood Bowl. "If Beethoven was alive today he would write music for games", claims founder Tommy Tallarico, who wrote the theme music for over 250 games including *Tony Hawk's*, *Spider-Man* and *Knockout Kings*.

Encore The orchestra will play more game tunes, we'll give you the details ASAP!

FASHION

EA game sponsors world's worst jeans

OK, so they turned Francis Ford Coppola's Oscar-winning Godfather trilogy into a mediocre third-person action adventure, but of all EA's sins, their greatest crime is against fashion. These truly hideous *The Godfather: The Game* jeans (pictured below, with a giant gold logo covering 90% of the thighs) were commissioned as limited edition merchandise, presumably to woo the fashion press or incredibly fickle gangsters. Unsurprisingly, they never made it to the UK, so the real shock is that they also made *The Godfather: The Game* trainers in association with Reebok, with a picture of Don Corleone sniffing a rose on the insole. As we write, we've been unable to find either pieces of merchandise on eBay, but even if the jeans were for sale, we'd be unlikely to make the seller an offer he can't refuse.

1 Don Corleone Trainers

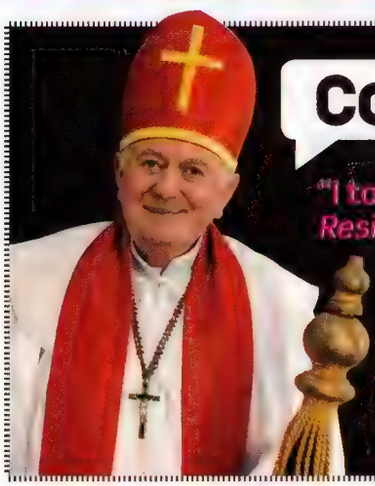
We don't know what's more preposterous – convincing a girl to go home with you while wearing chuffing great luminous *The Godfather: The Game* trainers, or expecting her to be impressed when you make your inevitable "I could walk all over a Mafia don" joke.

2 Actually fashionable bag

All *The Godfather* gear was designed by high end fashion company The Year Of... who are famous for their complex embroidered prints. This bag thing is actually sort-of OK, but let's be honest, it's all relative compared these jeans...

3 The world's worst jeans

Stationed next to the world's worst shoes and the world's most run-of-the-mill free-roaming game, however, only one item could possibly take centre stage. Imagine wearing them on Christmas day when you're greeting the relatives. *Honestly.* What would nan say?



Confess!

"I took ages to finish *Resi 4*. Here's why"

By: Mark Manning
Bedfordshire

EMAIL PSM3
Got a confession? Then we'll print it. Email us: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Unburden yourself!
I got very excited when I bought *Resident Evil 4*. I rushed home from the shops, slapped it in my PS2 and started playing. My immediate thought was: "This is amazing... if a little bit slow-paced."

I see. What then?
I shuffled into the village and took out all the townsfolk. They kept chasing me and nearly caught up several times, but I just about managed to outpace them all, however, so it never crossed my mind that Leon was being rather slower than he really should have been.

You, my son, are a dumbass
A bit later on, I did begin to think something was amiss. Leon was *incredibly* slow compared to Krauser, and stepping past the swinging blades was obscenely difficult when you consider how easy similar traps are in other games.

Enlightenment!
Then, during the mission near the end when your buddies come to assist you in their chopper and all hell is breaking loose, I accidentally jabbed ⓞ – and Leon broke into a sprint! I'd gone through almost the entire game without realising he could run. Oops.

ON THE DISC
Check out the PS2 reviews section for the latest games

PS2 Playlist

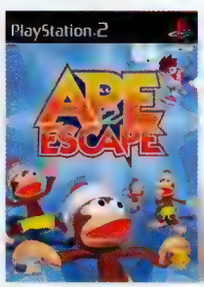
	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
DRIVING/ RACING	**BURNOUT REVENGE** **Pub** EA	**Dev** Criterion	**Web** burnout.ea.com "There are more races, action, gameplay twists and stuff to arse about with than the entirety of the rest of the series." **PSM3 Rating** 93% 80%	**GRAN TURISMO 4** **Pub** Sony	**Dev** Polyphony **Web** ganturismoworld.com "Nothing can stop the pleasure this flings in your face at 60 frames per second." **PSM3 Rating** 92% 90%	**COLIN MCRAE '04** **Pub** Codemasters	**Dev** Codemasters **Web** codemasters.co.uk "These cars really feel like a ton of metal being slid around mud at ridiculous speeds. Terrifically realistic" **PSM3 Rating** 92% 88%
PARTY/ EYETOY/ BEMANI	**GUITAR HERO 2** **Pub** Red Octane	**Dev** Red Octane	**Web** guitarherogame.com "Addresses every criticism and packs in a load of new stuff. A masterclass in sequel-making. Get it." **PSM3 Rating** 92% 81%	**SINGSTAR** **Pub** Sony	**Dev** Sony	**Web** singstargame.com "A bit of a duffer alone, with friends it's possibly the best game ever. Classy and genuinely groundbreaking." **PSM3 Rating** 90% 79%	**BUZZ: THE MUSIC QUIZ** **Pub** Sony	**Dev** Relentless **Web** playstation.com "A brilliant idea. Loads of questions and a truly inspired peripheral." **PSM3 Rating** 84% 75%
STEALTH	**METAL GEAR SOLID 3** **Pub** Konami	**Dev** Konami	**Web** konami.com "What does reticulated python taste like? Shoot one and try it for yourself. The best of the *Metal Gear* games yet." **PSM3 Rating** 97% 91%	**HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY** **Pub** Eidos	**Dev** IO Interactive **Web** hitmanbloodmoney.com "*Blood Money* is a sick, sick game. How developers get away with this kind of stuff is beyond us." **PSM3 Rating** 93% 96%	**MANHUNT** **Pub** Rockstar	**Dev** Rockstar **Web** rockstargames.com/manhunt "Unique, not least in its use of extreme violence to comment on extreme violence in videogames." **PSM3 Rating** 91% 90%
PLATFORMERS	**RATCHET AND CLANK 3** **Pub** SCEE	**Dev** Insomniac	**Web** ratchetandclank3.com "The gameplay is buttery-sleek and the cut-scenes made us laugh out loud." **PSM3 Rating** 92% 87%	**JAK 2: RENEGADE** **Pub** Sony	**Dev** Naughty Dog **Web** naughtydog.com "Crafty, yes, big, yes, sharply designed, yes... So slick, there's always something to aim at." **PSM3 Rating** 92% 82%	**PSYCHONAUTS** **Pub** Majesco	**Dev** Double Fine	**Web** psychonauts.com "Beneath the whimsy lies a deep tale of fear, love, anger, heartbreak, joy and sadness." **PSM3 Rating** 90% 80%

Monkey around PlayStation 2's most famous gaming simians

OOK!

Super Monkey Ball Deluxe

Pub Sega | **Dev** Sega
Web www.sega.com
Not just the prime primate game on PS2, but the best 'apes in balls trapped in rotating mazes' game... ever! Addictive and frustrating in equal measures. Shame about *Adventure* mode, mind you.
PSM3 Rating 84%



EEK!

Ape Escape

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony
Web apeescape.com
Track down your chums, hop about platforms, jump in vehicles and mess about with gadgets – the Banana-rang, for instance. One of the most imaginative games there is. Koj loves it too, hence the apes' appearance in *MGS3*.
PSM3 Rating 80%

AARGH!

Curious George

Pub EA | **Dev** Namco
Web curiousgeorgegame.com
Almost all PS2's monkey games are great. This, though, is a shockingly duff children's movie tie-in with enough frustrating pixel-perfect jumps to put you off Longleat for life. Please, whatever you do, don't buy *Curious George*.
PSM3 Rating 44%

Disagree with our choices? Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Lob your word bombs at psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

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What were they thinking?

They released it... Wooooo
Couldn't it have a why

R-Type Final

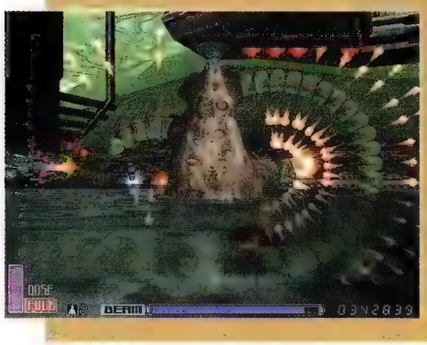
Pub Metro 3D | **Dev** Irem
Web www.rtype.com

That *R-Type Final* didn't sell is hardly a surprise. It's a 2D side-scrolling shooter for a start, which is about as fashionable these days as tank tops, flares and rickets. That it was the final episode of a series that peaked in popularity with *R-Types 1* and *2* in the '80s, the first *R-Type* on PS2 and indeed the first *R-Type* of any kind in five years probably didn't help either. So no matter how good the game might have been – and it is *very* good – it was handicapped from the start.

Those who actually *tried* it might have been put off as well – *R-Type Final* is harder than a concrete bouncer. It makes you work harder than almost any game you'll play these days. About six seconds in, your underpowered ship is thrown into a confrontation with a giant space crab, then an alien pod that can alter the shape of the landscape around you, and then you're thrown into the ocean and find yourself battling dozens of oversized deadly fish creatures. Sure, you're handed stacks of continues, but beginners will rattle through them almost immediately. Only the really stubborn perservere after that.

And that's a shame, because *R-Type Final* is every bit the equal of *Gradius V* (which is the only game people tend of think of when 2D shooters get mentioned) and deserves attention. Want something that'll challenge you, that won't hold your hand for the entire game? *R-Type Final* is it.

EMAIL PSM3
Want to champion a game here? Let us know.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

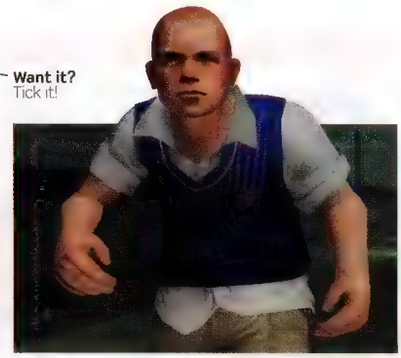


PlayStation 2 Top 20

This month's big retail winners and losers

01	(01)	**Pro Evolution Soccer 6**	Konami **Reviewed** PSM80 91%	
02	NEW	**Need For Speed: Carbon**	Eidos **Reviewed** PSM81 82%	
03	(03)	**Canis Canem Edit**	Rockstar **Reviewed** PSM81 93%	
04	(02)	**FIFA 07**	EA **Reviewed** PSM80 84%	
05	(04)	**Scarface**	Eidos **Reviewed** PSM81 89%	
06	(05)	**The Sims 2: Pets**	EA **Reviewed** PSM82 53%	*Feed me or die*
07	(06)	**Lego Star Wars 2**	Eidos **Reviewed** PSM82 91%	
08	(11)	**Splinter Cell: Double Agent**	Ubisoft **Reviewed** PSM80 85%%	
09	(08)	**Buzz: Junior Jungle Party**	Sony **Reviewed** PSM80 68%	
10	(15)	**Spyro: A New Beginning**	Vivend **Reviewed** PSM81 63%	*Not magic*
11	(07)	**Buzz: The Big Quiz**	Sony **Reviewed** PSM68 74%	
12	NEW	**Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenchai 2**	Atari **Reviewed** N/A	
13	(12)	**Mortal Kombat: Armaggedon**	Midway **Reviewed** PSM81 80%	
14	(13)	**Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2007**	EA **Reviewed** PSM81 72%	
15	(10)	**Destroy All Humans 2**	THQ **Reviewed** PSM81 73%	
16	(14)	**Kingdom Hearts 2**	Square Enix **Reviewed** PSM80 94%	*Quaaaaaaaaack!*
17	NEW	**Marvel: Ultimate Alliance**	Activision **Reviewed** Reviewed N/A	
18	(19)	**Open Season**	Ubisoft **Reviewed** PSM81 61%	
19	(17)	**Just Cause**	Eidos **Reviewed** PSM80 78%	
20	(16)	**LMA Manager 2007**	Codemasters **Reviewed** PSM79 74%	

Want it? Tick it!

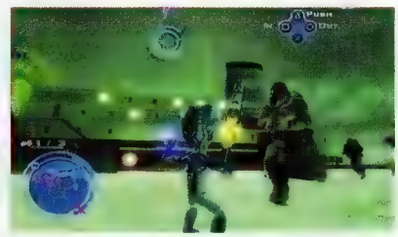


Too cool for school

Another resounding success for Rockstar, and one in the eye for the papers that wanted *Canis* banned. Tip: kiss two girls consecutively and enjoy the catfight.

The hard cell

Out goes *MGS: Subsistence*, in comes the other grumpy old man of stealth, Sam Fisher. Can't wait to see him snap necks on PS3.



Destroy of the Rovers

If we destroyed all humans the first time round, how come there are loads left for *Destroy All Humans 2*? It simply doesn't make any sense.

81,639

The first two days of Japanese PS3 sales. 66,864 games were bought – less than machines. Hmm...

You're playing...

Smiff
Smiff's made a fearsome *PES* team. Plus Frank Lampard.

1 **PES6** "My master league team: Pellizzoli, Menchena, Lopez, Carvalho, Toure, Lampard, Robben, Fabregas, Deisler, Henry, Adriano."
2 **Scarface** "I love that you can smuggle kilos of drugs into Miami."
3 **Resident Evil 4** "One of my friends hates *Resi 4*, but the others all love it, so *Resi 4* wins."

We're playing...

Rich Broughton
Rich likes cutesy cartoons and bloody death. Yin and yang.

1 **Kingdom Hearts 2** "I'm so close to completing it 100%. AARGH! WHY CAN'T I BEAT SEPHIROTH?!"
2 **Resistance: Fall Of Man** "I love driving through Cheddar Gorge shooting things. What, you can do that in the game as well?"
3 **Guitar Hero 2** "Still no AC/DC, but you've got to love Warrant."

They're playing...

David Braben
The man behind *Thrillville* is really into... *Thrillville*.

1 **Kingdom Hearts 2** "A little dated in gameplay, but a charming mix of Square and Disney characters."
2 **LocoRoco** "A great, refreshingly different and beautifully simply game mechanic, ideal for PSP."
3 **Thrillville** "Every element has to be thoroughly tested and balanced, and I still enjoy it."

ON THE DISC
Want to see the latest PSP games rated? Go here

PSP Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
PUZZLERS	**LOCOROCO** **Pub** SCEI | **Dev** SCEI **Web** locoroco.com "Guide your grinning sphere through various lands. Odd, entertaining and the happiest game there is on PSP." **PSM3 Rating** 93%	**LUMINES 2** **Pub** Buena Vista | **Dev** Q | **Web** lumines2thegame.com "Games like this are what your PSP was made for. Hypnotic puzzle action that you'll play for ages. Just great." **PSM3 Rating** 92%	**MERCURY MELTDOWN** **Pub** Ignition | **Dev** Awesome Studios | **Web** ignitionent.com "Terrific fun, offering plenty of levels that are totally bewildering. A superior head-scratcher." **PSM3 Rating** 82%
FOOTBALL	**FOOTBALL MANAGER HANDHELD 2007** **Pub** Sega | **Dev** Sports Interactive **Web** sigames.com "Takes last year's version and builds on it. Exceeds expectations and stands tall." **PSM3 Rating** 86%	**PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami | **Web** pesfan.com "By no means perfect, but *PES6* is essential for fans of the series. More than enough reason to take PSP on a journey." **PSM3 Rating** 84%	**FIFA '06** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA **Web** easports..com/games/fifa06 "The camera works well, the atmosphere is realistic and the Season mode provides great depth" **PSM3 Rating** 81%
RPG/ STRATEGY	**FIELD COMMANDER** **Pub** Ubisoft | **Dev** Sony Online **Web** fieldcommander.station.sony.com "You get a real sense of achievement as your gang of upstarts turns the tables on your overwhelming foe." **PSM3 Rating** 82%	**METAL GEAR ACID 2** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami **Web** konami.com "Tactical Japanese card game that comes with a pair of cardboard goggles to fool the eye into thinking the game is in 3D. Quirky." **PSM3 Rating** 80%	**LORD OF THE RINGS TACTICS** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** ea.com "There are good and evil Story modes, so you can fight against Frodo if you like." **PSM3 Rating** 80%
SHOOTERS/ SHOOT-EM-UPS	**KILLZONE: LIBERATION** **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Guerilla | **Web** killzone.com "The FPS has been ditched for a friendly 3D set-up. A massively enjoyable blaster that suits PSP perfectly." **PSM3 Rating** 85%	**SOCOM: FIRETEAM BRAVO** **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Zipper | **Web** socom-game.com "*Fireteam Bravo* not only looks lush on the tiny screen, it handles like a dream as well. A seamless experience." **PSM3 Rating** 83%	**ACE COMBAT X** **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Namco | **Web** acecombatgame.com "Plenty similar to recent PS2 efforts, but the multi-player side makes it well worth a look." **PSM3 Rating** 80%

Chocks away! Take to the skies in PS2's finest plane-'em-ups

ACES HIGH

Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War

Pub Namco | **Dev** Namco
Web dirgeofcerberus.net
It's an *Ace Combat* like any other, really, but *Zero* is the ideal first step into the world of dogfighting. Lots of heavy-duty combat, lots of throttle-grippingly exciting boss battles... great plane goodness.
PSM3 Rating 74%

SEA SORE

Heroes Of The Pacific

Pub Codemasters | **Dev** IR Gurus
Web heroesofthepacific.com
Ignored by everyone, but *Heroes Of The Pacific*, while not doing anything new, can be impossibly exciting. Whip dangerously low over the sea, blast 'bogies' out of the sky... it's an underrated little game, this one.
PSM3 Rating 79%

FRENCH LESSON

Secret Weapons Over Normandy

Pub Lucasarts | **Dev** Totally Games
Web lucasarts.com
SWON is rammed with accuracy and is good fun, though it is to planespotters what a Penny Black is to stamp collectors – a good reason to let off a tiny bit of wee in excitement.
PSM3 Rating 76%

Disagree with our choices? Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Lob your word bombs at: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

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Nice Apps

Trick up your console

For the record

App Sandisk V-Mate
Web sandisk.com
So confused by season three of Lost that you need to watch it again on the bus to try and make some damn sense of it? Try the V-Mate, which is basically a video recorder for your PSP. Plug it into your TV and insert your memory stick, and you'll be able to tape anything you fancy, and even tell it when to stop and start recording – just like a VHS player, before DVD killed them. It's a handy gadget, certainly, and one that'll save you messing about changing video formats until your PSP deigns to allow you to actually watch the things. Useful.

Vid marks

App PS3 Video 9
Web redkawa.com/videoconverters/ps3video9
Got a PlayStation 3? Of course you haven't. But on the off-chance that we're wrong and you do have a magic Sony box of your own, you may have been messing around with PS3's video playback options and found that PS3 doesn't like certain file types – .avi, .wmv and so on. No problem. Just download PS3 Video 9 from the site above, and you'll be able to watch all those 'special' movies you downloaded onto your laptop in full-on hi-def PlayStation 3 goodness. And all for free. Terrific.

Tower up

App UMD tower | **Web** naki-world.com
PSP's been out for ages now, so you've probably built up quite a collection of UMDs, which are probably scattered all over your bedroom like so much heavy, digital confetti. No more, then, with this handy UMD storage tower. It holds 15 games and – ready for this? – lights up with a blue glow, just like the signs of seedy LA brothels. We're told. Anyway, it looks smart and keeps your discs in order. Simple.

Jack tower Store your UMDs in this glowing game tower.

Early Warning System

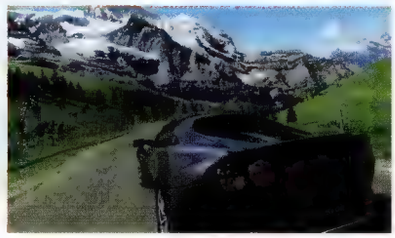
Your PlayStation release schedule

Game	Publisher	Out	Format	Want it? Tick it!
Combat Elite World War 2 Paratroopers	Deep Silver	Dec 22	PS2	☐
Battlestations Midway	Eidos	Dec 22	PS2	☐
Airborne Troops	PlayLogic	Dec 22	PS2	☐
World Snooker Championship 2007	Sega	Jan 12	PS2	☐
God Of War 2	Sony	Jan 20	PS2	☐
NBA Ballers Rebound	Midway	Jan 20	PSP	☐
Final Fantasy XII	Square Enix	Jan 20	PS2	☐
DIRT	Deep Silver	Jan 20	PS2	☐
Sega Mega Drive Collection	Sega	Jan 20	PS2	☐
Capcom Classics Collection Reloaded 2	Capcom	Feb 2	PS2	☐
Arthur And The Invisibles	Atari	Feb 2	PS2	☐
Okami	Capcom	Feb 9	PS2	☐
Test Drive Unlimited	Atari	Feb 16	PSP	☐
Capcom Puzzle World	Capcom	Feb 16	PSP	☐
Shin Megami Tensai – Digital Devil Saga 2	Atlus	Feb 16	PS2	☐
God Hand	Capcom	Feb 16	PS2	☐
Hot PXL	Atari	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Activision Hits Remixed	Activision	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Samurai Warriors 2 Empires	Koei	Feb 23	PS2	☐
Hammy Goes Nuts	Activision	Feb 23	PS2	☐
PlayStation 3 launches in Britain	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Gran Turismo 5	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Half-Life 2	EA	March	PS3	☐
The Darkness	2K Games	March	PS3	☐
SingStar	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Heavenly Sword	Sony	March	PS3	☐
MotorStorm	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Call Of Duty 3	Activision	March	PS3	☐
Resistance: Fall Of Man	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Ridge Racer 7	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Haze	Ubisoft	March	PS3	☐
Dungeons And Dragons: Tactics	Atari	March 23	PSP	☐
King Of Fighters: Maximum Impact 2	Ignition	March 23	PS2	☐
Pimp My Ride	Activision	March 23	PS2	☐
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops	Konami	March 30	PSP	☐
Virtua Tennis 3	Sega	March 30	PSP	☐
Ratchet And Clank: Size Matters	Konami	March 30	PSP	☐
Madden 2007	EA	March 30	PSP	☐
Coded Arms: Contagion	Sega	March 30	PSP	☐
Earthworm Jim	Atari	March 30	PSP	☐

Caution: all release dates are accurate at time of press but liable to drastic change

Final Fantasy XII

We reviewed the US version of this last month and gave it 94%. It'll be out in the UK soon – unless it gets delayed *again* – and it really is finger-sniffin' good.



Gran Turismo 5

So will it be ready for the UK's PS3 launch day? While there will be some GTHD content to be had via the download store, we're praying the full game makes it.

Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops

The first 'proper' *Metal Gear* on PSP, this, and we can only hope PSP's limitations don't hamper the game in any way. More news as we get it.

eBay Going, Going, Gone PlayStation auction action

Okami buddha board

No, we hadn't heard of a buddha board either, but special journalistic investigations (Google) reveal it to be a special board that, when 'painted' over with water and a brush, reveals the image imprinted on it – in this case, a picture of the *Okami* box art. And then, after a few minutes, it vanishes – and you can do it again. What's the point? Damned if we know.

Sold $13.00 **Original Price** $11.00
Profit $2.00

BloodRayne sword

There's a thriving industry in replicas of game weapons, most notably those from *Final Fantasy* and *Kingdom Hearts*. But *FF* and *Kingdom Hearts* are good. *BloodRayne*, however, is tat and we can only assume that the sort of people who'd want a replica of her sword are the sort of people who get 'aroused' controlling a pixellated, rubber-clad vampire. Ugh.

Sold $19.00 **Original Price** $19.00
Profit $0

Sonic the Hedgehog suit

Yeah. We know what you're thinking. You're thinking: "I'm a young, happening kinda guy. I just need that one thing to give me that edge with the ladies." Well, friends, look no further – it's a Sonic (and Shadow) outfit, and it practically redefines the word 'suave'. Don this, and you'll be the centre of any party. Because everyone will laugh and point and jeer and you'll leave in tears.

Sold $36.10 **Original Price** $6.00
Profit $30.10

ON THE DISC
See what PS3 is capable of on your free DVD

PlayStation 3 The Facts

The latest facts and figures from the world of PS3 updated monthly

The price Less than £400?

Still no official word on price but the news that the 60Gb machine will be cheaper than expected in Japan could mean good news for Europe. Less than £400? Prices in Euros have been announced: 20Gb version = €499, 60Gb = €599. That converts to £339 and £408, but insiders (i.e. PSM3) are predicting that the 20Gb version won't be released in the UK.

The launch date March

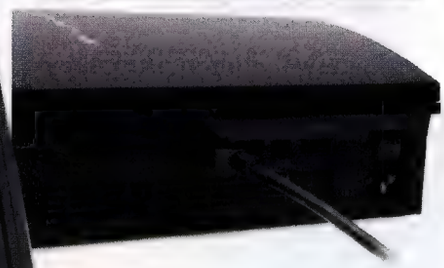
So this is how long it's going to be until PlayStation 3 arrives in Europe. Bah. Of course, in Japan and the US, they're playing PS3 right now. Curse you, Sony. Anyway, no telling exactly what date PS3 will launch in Europe now. Our guess is March 23. It still feels like there's months to go. This is because there is.

20Gb vs 60Gb

Will the 20Gb unit go on sale in the UK? Sony are yet to deny that it's on the way so there's still life in the 'ham-strung but cheaper' model yet. It has a 20Gb instead of a 60Gb and does without the Wi-Fi and memory card slots. However, Ken Kutaragi has said that it WILL have the HDMI output making it well worth considering.

HDMI support

Sony are playing PS3's HDMI fiddle reeeal loud. This all-digital port is now on both models of PS3 and delivers True HD sound and full HD 1080p pictures – both things that Xbox 360 with its analogue component output can't do. Question is, given that you can't really see the difference, does anyone care?



Blu-ray

PS3 plays Blu-ray discs – the brand new hi-def movie format that kicks DVD's ass. The very first (£1000) Blu-ray players are on sale now, or you can wait for PS3 in March 2007.

True HD sound

Dolby Digital 5.1, and EX 6.1 and 7.1 sound great but PS3 can do better. It supports Dolby True HD too – the format that's an exact copy of a movie's cinema soundtrack. DTHD amps are getting cheaper all the time but are still hundreds of notes right now.

The launch games

These won't be confirmed until the week before launch but here are our day one March 2007 predictions (with our favourites in red).

Game	Publisher
Blazing Angels: Squadrons of WWII	Ubisoft
Call Of Duty 3	Activision
EA Sports Fight Night Round 3	EA
F.E.A.R.	Vivendi
Full Auto 2 Battlelines	Sega
Genji: Days of the Blade	Sony
Madden NFL 07	EA
Marvel Ultimate Alliance	Activision
Mobile Suit Gundam: Crossfire	Namco Bandai
NBA 07	EA
NBA 2K7	2K Sports
Need For Speed: Carbon	EA
NHL 2K7	EA
Ridge Racer 7	Namco Bandai
Resistance: Fall of Man	Sony
Sonic the Hedgehog	Sega
The Elder Scrolls IV Oblivion	Bethesda
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07	EA
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Vegas	EA
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Acivision
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	Sony

How to get a PS3

PS3 is out now in America and Japan. You can buy one right now (if you're lucky enough to find one and don't mind paying the incredible prices folk are bound to charge). You're better off waiting until March for a UK console. Want to stay up to the minute, super accurate? Then check out www.psm3mag.com. The moment a legit pre-order system goes live we'll tell you all about it there.

Motion-sensitive controller

The new PS3 pad doesn't vibrate. Instead it can sense tilt and movement. Want to turn a corner? Just twist the pad. We can confirm that it's super-light – even lighter than the PS2 pad despite its extra innards – and it works great.

PS3 specs appeal

	60Gb	20Gb
CPU	Cell Processor	
GPU	RSX	
Sound	Dolby 5.1ch, DTS, LPCM, etc. (Cell-based processing)	
Memory	256Mb XDR Main RAM, 256Mb GDDR3 VRAM	
BD/DVD/CD drive	Read only. Maximum read speed BD 2x (BD-ROM), DVD 8x (DVD-ROM), CD 24x (CD-ROM), SACD 2x	
Dimensions	Approximately 325mm by 98mm by 274mm	
Weight	Approx 5kg	
Communication	Ethernet x1, 1000BASE-T IEEE 802.11 b and g, Bluetooth 2.0 Controller Wireless (Bluetooth)	Ethernet x1, 1000BASE-T Bluetooth 2.0 Controller Wireless (Bluetooth)
Input/Output	USB 2.0 (x4) Memory Stick SD card Compact Flash Card	USB 2.0 (x4)
HDD	2.5" Serial ATA 60Gb	2.5" Serial ATA 20Gb

Got a PS3 question? Then we'll answer it. Send your next-gen console queries to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "PS3 question"

Now Showing

Movies for your console

DVD New on DVD

Dead Or Alive

Director Corey Yuen | **Starring** Jaime Presley, Holly Valance, Sarah Carter, Devon Aoki, Natassia Malthe Obviously, we're not into this just 'cos of the scantily-clad high-kicking ladies. Dead Or Alive is an intelligent study of the attitude of society to powerful women, with a plot to rival Chekhov. And Holly Valance near-nude. *Cooorrr.*

UMD selection

Heathers

Director Michael Lehmann | **Starring** Winona Ryder, Christian Slater, Shannon Doherty, Lisanne Falk Ah, possibly the greatest teen movie ever helps prop up the ailing UMD format. Christian Slater is inherently cool as the attractive outsider turned rampant madman and the three Heathers are some of the most evil creations in movies. The script is sharp and funny, the action rips past and the whole thing is ludicrously tongue-in-cheek. We wish our schooldays had been like this. Actually, thinking about that, no, we don't.

Blu-ray choice

Lethal Weapon

Director: Richard Donner | **Starring** Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Gary Busey, Mitch Ryan, Tom Atkins You probably don't need us to explain Lethal Weapon to you, but to sum up: two cops, one near retirement, one a loose cannon, take on a drugs baron named 'The General'. As simple and as legendary as that, and far and away one of the best movies you can get on Blu-ray at the moment, although that says as much about the quality (or lack of it) of movies on the format as it does about how great Lethal Weapon is.

PSM3 Tunes Where you get great music for free

I Disappear
The Faint

Dark, grinding electro that sounds like someone threw a load of keyboards into Gary Numan's magimix.
Get it: freeindie.com

Heavy Metal (live)
Clap Your Hands Say Yeah

Indie up-and-comers perform another of their spikier-than-a-bearpit tunes complete with raspy vocals and a harmonica.
Get it: myspace.com/clapyourhandssayyeah

For The Girl
The Fratellis

You've got to become a member of their site to get this special acoustic version, but don't panic – joining is as free as the air around you.
Get it: thefratellis.com/members

Lover I Don't Have To Love
Bright Eyes

Top class indie miserablism, ideal for sulking along to when you're in a massive huff.
Get it: www.freeindie.com

B-Level Motion
Bo-Peep

Three shouty Japanese ladies produce the sort of awe-inspiring noise you can probably hear from the other end of the universe. Prepare to have your eardrums stolen and smashed.
Get it: myspace.com/bopeepjapan

Take It Off
The Donnas

Remember this from the soundtrack to the first *Guitar Hero*? Of course you do, because it's some of the best all-girl punk rock, like, ever. Skill.
Get it: thedonnas.com

Tune-up Send us your music links and we'll stick 'em in the mag. Email: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "Music!"

Object of Desire

You might not be able to afford it, but it's still gorgeous

Optoma HD81 Ultra-posh hi-def projector

Buy a 1080p telly? Well, you could do that. Or you could be that bit different – or mental, if you choose to view it that way – and get yourself a hi-def projector so you can play your PS3 games across a 'screen' the size of your bedroom wall.

So what does this mean to you? Well, sparing you a load of technical jargon (there's a box over there, should that sort of thing be your, erm, thing), what it means is you'll get *Call Of Duty 3* in incredible depth and detail, with each mutilated soldier appearing in front of you with astonishing size and realism. It's like having World War 2 take place in your bedroom. Switch to first-person view in *MotorStorm*, meanwhile, and it's pretty much like you're actually taking part in a mud-drenched off-road race yourself, and you'll find yourself ducking for protection every time a lorry hurtles off a cliff and explodes in front of you.

Except none of you have PlayStation 3s yet, most likely, but you could hook your PS2 up to it instead and still be amazed by the lush, rich colours of the likes of *Final Fantasy XII* or *Okami* displayed in eye-expanding massive-o-vision.

Admittedly, it's somewhat prohibitively expensive at £5000 (think how many PS3s you could buy for that), but if you're really, really rich then you should get this. And can you lend us a tenner until payday?

Tech Spec

Price £5000
Features 1080p projection, 10,000:1 contrast ratio, three HDMI, four component and two SCART RGB ports.
Web optoma.com

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I LET THEM HAVE ME 0909 925 6032
MY FIRST OFFICE PARTY 0909 925 6025
BORED & ALONE, LETS PLAY 0909 925 6014
I WILL IF YOU BUY ME A NEW TOP 0909 925 6004
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Independent women seeks hot text flings at the weekends All races ages up to 45 only
High text demand in: Newcastle, London, N East, Shires

Dark hair, big firm chested girls looking for a good time no strng as returning back
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These girls only come out to play in the evenings All race & ages up to 50
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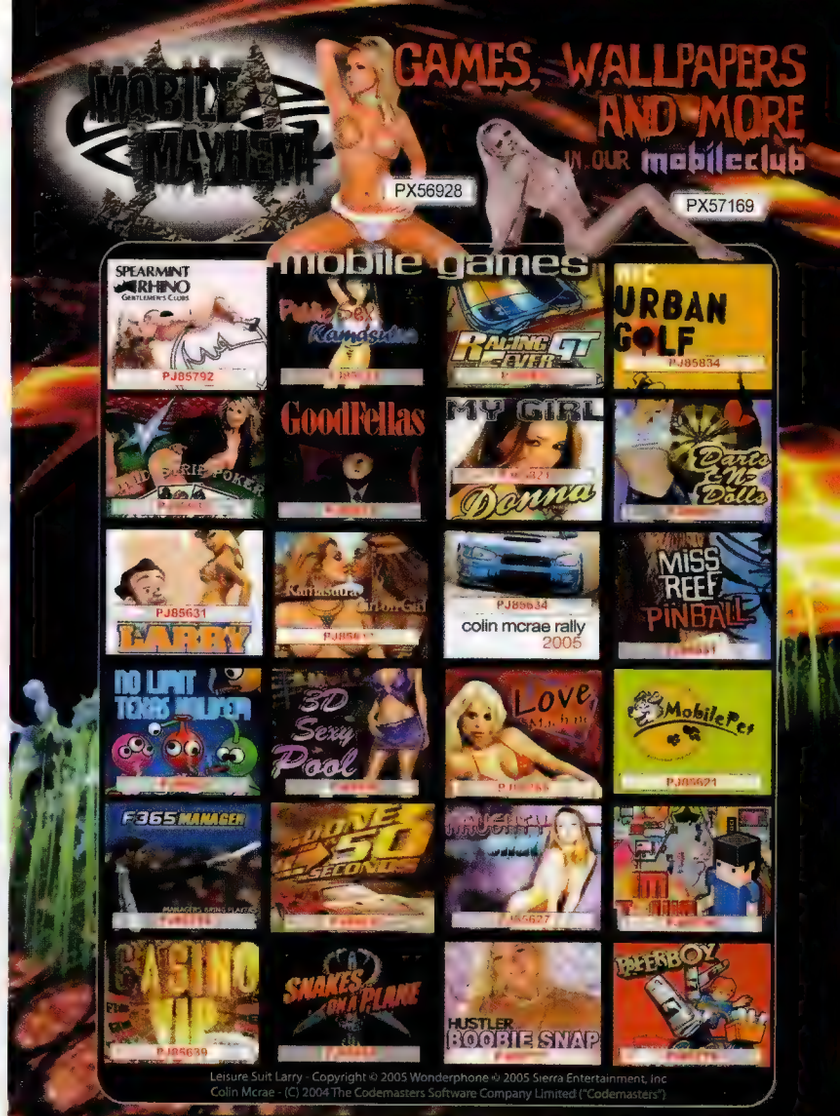

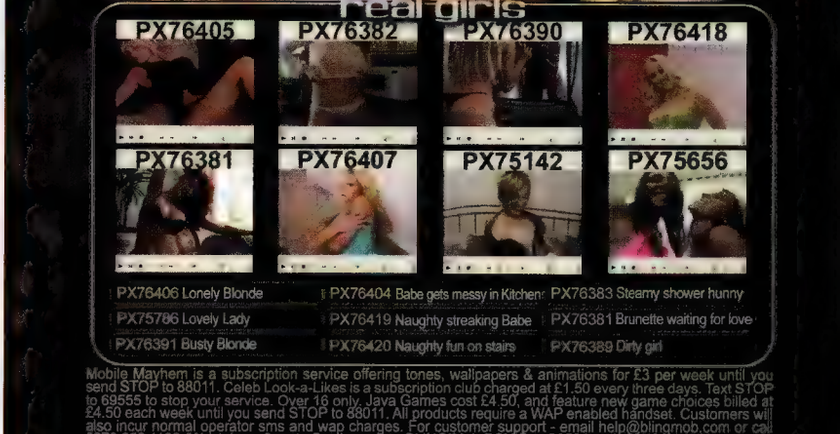

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5 things to remember this month

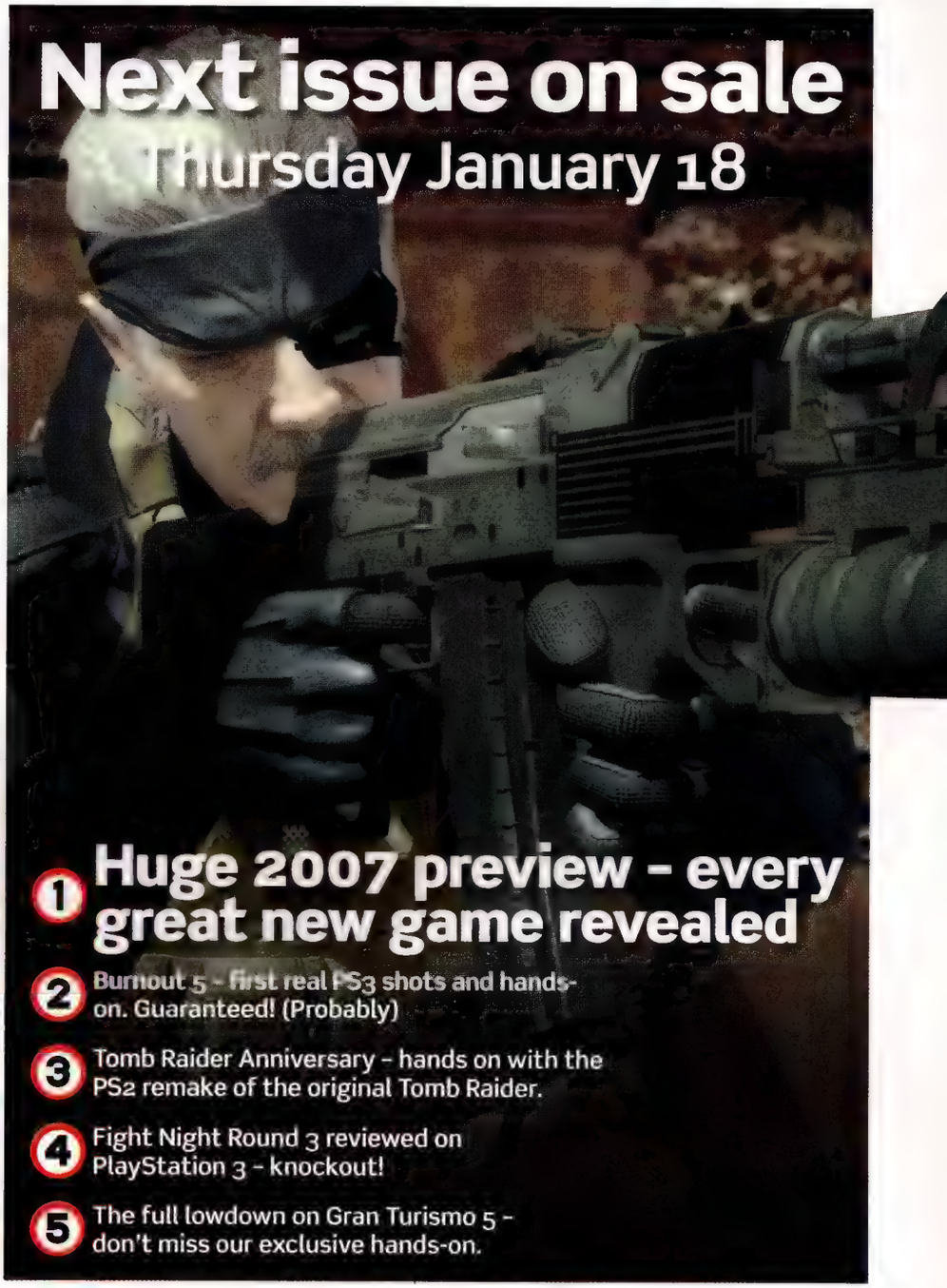
***The Godfather* missed a trick**
"*The Darkness* sees you as a Mafioso with super-powers"
page 20

***Resistance* can be disturbing**
"There's a swarm of alien cockroaches scurrying down your throat"
page 52

PS3 is worth kipping on the streets for
"I walk in with it held proudly aloft, arms aching from the strain. Everyone claps."
page 42

***Larry* reflects real life accurately**
"Larry has to dress as a tree to seal the deal, but who hasn't been in that situation?"
page 88

PS3 is better than sex. Maybe.
"'I'll give you a free lady, or ladies, of your choice.' 'It ain't ever gonna happen.'"
page 102



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3. Tomb Raider Anniversary – hands on with the PS2 remake of the original Tomb Raider.
4. Fight Night Round 3 reviewed on PlayStation 3 – knockout!
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Subject: PlayStation 3 European launch – we need more time!

Body Text | Variable Width

Guys,

Launching PlayStation 3 in the UK in March 2007 is MADNESS! I've been speaking to Qube Fauntleroy over at our viral marketing department and he says he needs AT LEAST six more months for his new four-pronged advertising attack.

The following haven't even been prepped yet!

- Veteran arthouse director Chris Cunningham is set to direct a series of 87 adverts starring Colin Farrell. In each, Farrell says something inaudible to a frog, who croaks "PlayStation 3" back at him in an Irish accent. The commercials are in black and white, but Farrell's head is bright orange. It's already cost us ten million!

- Underground 'graff' artist Banksy is painting PS3-shaped silhouettes on the side of every bus in London. But the twist is, the silhouettes look NOTHING like PS3s which is symbolic and should get people talking, and will appeal directly to graffiti and hip-hop counterculture. They're our biggest market according to Qube, who has listened to 'The Chronic' six or seven times. We need at least another six months to get this right!

- The cubes. We have a dump truck full of blue cubes and we're going to drive it to Norwich, dropping them on the roads as we go. The plan is that people in Norwich will pick the cubes up and take them wherever they go, thus spreading the cubes across the country. And Qube's mum lives in Norwich, so while he's there he can go and see her. And give her a cube. NOT distributing the cubes would be A DISASTER!!!!

- Christopher Walken, topless, stood atop Nelson's Column with the words 'shit bastard' painted across his chest. One word – symbolism. Can we afford to launch PS3 without it? That's right - NO!

– Somebody dropped the China baby from the US PS3 ads, and we need a few more weeks to remould his head. I think the 'mind blowing' angle we came up with in our reiki rubdown meeting won't er… rub.

Do you see? We need SIX MORE MONTHS! I know I can rely on you!

Toodle pippety,
Minstrel Partridge-Wells,
Sony Europe marketing department

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PES5 Subscription offer
page 40

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36953	36891	GIRLS ALOUD	Something Kinda Ooh
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